

Keynote Address by the Minister of Energy: Honorable Dipuo Peters, MP

At the Launch of the BP south Africa service Station – Ebony Park

11 December 2012

Chairman of the Board of BP South Africa

Members of the BP Board

CEO of BP South Africa

Executive Management of BP South Africa

Councillor Princess Nodikane - Local Area Councillor for Ward 111

Chairman of Petroleum Retailers Association Forum (PRAF) – Mr. MC Lamprecht;

CEO of Fuel Retailers Association (FRA) – Mr. Reggie Sibiya

Honoured Guests;

Ladies and gentlemen.

Good Morning

It brings me great pleasure to celebrate with you the opening of this beautiful service station, which is in line with my Department's vision for the transformation of the retail sector of this dynamic energy industry. I am told that this service station is ideally situated to become successful in this growing market and economy. This is a model story for dealers across the country alike, to implement a project such as this one given the on-going challenges around issues of transformation. All dealers are encouraged to

identify employees like Phanel Sinthumule and Elvis Sithagu, who I learn started out as pump attendants and casual workers. Yet they demonstrated such high levels of enthusiasm and dedication and worked their way up the “petroleum pipeline” from holding the nozzle to holding ownership. They have been empowered and are now the owners and managers of their own business. I am sure that situated where it is at such a busy point it will thrive over time and enable them to have 100% ownership of this retail site. This is indeed an encouraging story of transformation. To see the industry making it possible for previously historically disadvantaged individuals with the entrepreneurial spirit being given the opportunity to rise to such heights. Owning a service station with such high projected pumping capacity. I trust that this is the way that BP intends to continue to go forward, as this trend also begins to answer some of the issues identified in the recent outcomes of the Liquid Fuels Charter audit. We commend you for promoting the building of empowering partnerships within the sector, and hope that the success of this partnership serves as a template in many of your transformation endeavors in the retail energy sector.

Programme Director, ladies and gentlemen the launch of this laudable project takes place at the end of an auspicious year. A year that began with the celebration of 100 years of the African National Congress – the party which has been in government since the dawn of democracy upon our beloved country in 1994. In a few days’ time the ANCs policy conference will again engage all government employees to review how well we are doing in achieving the mandates placed upon us. For us at the Department of Energy, our mandate enjoins us to ensure that all citizens enjoy access to energy that is affordable, sustainable and secure.

Ladies and gentlemen, this concern with issues of energy is not limited to this government alone. Rather it is a matter of global concern and action, and is clearly demonstrated in the actions of the General Council of the United Nations which declared 2012 the year of access to sustainable energy for all. In their recognition for sustained global action on this issue, the United Nations recognised energy as an essential ingredient in ensuring sustainable livelihoods for all peoples of the world.

In the light of such global concern for accelerated action in the sector, South Africa needs to continuously grow the initiatives opportunities required to avail to those who were previously deprived. These initiatives must become a norm in our retail space. And as South Africans, we all need to be constantly asking ourselves - **“what can we do to empower and uplift our people.”**

Programme Director, I am thrilled to learn during its maiden month in August this year, this service station pumped 750 000 litres of petroleum products. What an auspicious start which can only be due to the great partnership, mentorship, and training of individuals that has taken place in this instance. Initiatives such as this one bring excitement to us as leaders in this sector. Above all, these initiatives lend credence to President Jacob Zuma’s stated belief that partnerships such as this one are essential in order for transformation to be realised for the benefit of all citizens.

In the past 18 months the Department of Energy has shown its commitment to promoting energy security across the spectrum with the implementation of the Independent Power Producers bid programme. To date we have secured 1 400MW of Renewable Energy when we reached Financial Close for the twenty eight (28) Window

1 bidders. Enterprises such as this one are also encouraged to join in the renewables project by implementing measures that promote energy security, and energy efficiency. 'How' you may ask? You could convert this massive canopy to be able trap sunlight through solar panels that can then be used to light up this forecourt. Or how about installing water tanks to trap rain water for reuse at the car wash?. We wish to see such innovations implemented at new service stations that have the opportunity to maximise energy efficiency strategies.

As a Department dedicated to the transformation of women in the energy sector, I encourage BP and dealers to make an effort in empowering the mothers of our nation. This will ensure that women play an active role in the future of this industry.

Coming out of the acknowledgement of 16-days of non-violence against women and children, I believe that we must uphold the principle of 365 days of non-violence against these vulnerable groups. A common strategy in the fight to eradicate violence against women and children is the adoption and implementation of programmes towards the empowerment of our women and youth. If nothing else, this will give us the credibility to speak-out about these issues. It will give us the platform to influence and assist others in this struggle. No one should ever underestimate the power of empowered women - Malibongwe!!

The levels of inequality, under representation as well as the unemployment rate among women are challenges that require a partnership between Government and the Private sector.

An area that requires focus is equity in the retail service stations. We will need to work together to ensure that in the allocation of retail sites, there is a bias towards those sections of the population that are not well represented. Given the reason we are here today, BP has recorded their efforts towards the real upliftment of the HDSAs, and I repeat that we as Government will be very pleased and encouraged if this is template reaches across your network. We encourage you to make sure that you choose those that meet your standards and those that are prepared to put in the long hours, days and nights like the two gentlemen that have been empowered here.

As we enter the festive season, I take this opportunity to stress the importance of safety on our roads. Let us not be party to the loss of ANY lives. Rather, let us ensure that we play a pivotal part in providing value adding services to our citizens as we welcome them to fill up, and take time out to revive themselves from their long drives. Remember that driver fatigue is listed as one of the top causes of the road carnage on our roads. Also, let's all remember not to drink and drive. Nor should we be afraid to discourage others from such dangerous behaviour. Whatever the state of the fuel price, lets also change our driving habits for the better! Reduce speed, show courtesy to fellow motorists, and remember that we share the roads with pedestrians and allow them to cross the roads where it is appropriate!

Allow me to conclude by talking about the people that really offer us service at the Service Stations - the retail workers. They are the ones that ensure that we can continue drive without worrying too much worry. The 60 000 of them are there 365 days,

day or night, in all weathers. They fill up our cars with a smile and a greeting, and are known to rescue many damsels in distress – without expecting or demanding any kind of thank you! Today, I say to you lets show our appreciation to these men and women who go out of their way to assist us at all times. And when the opportunity arises for us to recognise and assist those who demonstrate the potential shown by Elvis and Phaniel, let's be there for them. After all “a better life” for them means a better life for all. As caring South Africans, we must make it our business to ensure that we contribute to the improvement of the quality of life of the workers in the retail sector. Provide opportunities to deserving workers by equity and management empowerment.

Once again I wish you a joyous and safe festive period.

I thank you! Ke a leboga!

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