



**Welcoming Remarks by the Minister of Energy, Ms Dipuo Peters, MP
on the occasion of the 15th BASIC Ministerial Coordination Meeting
Reception Dinner held in Cape Town, 27 June 2013**

Ministers

Excellencies

Distinguished Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

It is unfortunate that Minister Molewa could not be with you this evening due to an engagement she had to attend at the request of the President. She will, however, be arriving in Cape Town from Maputo later this evening.

Let me start by welcoming you to South Africa, Cape Town in particular.

Let me also take this opportunity to thank you all for honouring this invitation. A special welcome to Minister Xie Zhenhua, Vice Chairman of the National Development and Reform Commission of China.

The negotiations under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) during the first two weeks of June in Bonn captured significant attention.

Unfortunately, this interest was for the wrong reasons in that negotiations were severely delayed when delegates could not reach agreement on the agenda for one of the permanent subsidiary bodies of the the UNFCCC.

You will recall that there was a similar situation last year, in respect of the agenda for the Adhoc Working Group on the Durban Platform.

This is a serious concern, in light of the urgency to make progress with all negotiations under the UNFCCC, in a balanced manner, and in particular to meet the deadline that was set in Durban, at the COP17 / CMP 7, to finalize the negotiation of a protocol, legal instrument or agreed outcome with legal force, under the Convention, applicable to all Parties, by 2015.

The negotiation challenges are an indication that climate change is increasingly a critical and contested economic issue. This was reflected in the statement by G8 leaders in their summit earlier this month in Northern Ireland, when they recognized *climate change as one of the foremost challenges for our future economic growth and well-being and a contributing factor in increased economic and security risks globally.*

The United Nations General Assembly will convene a Leaders' Summit next year, dedicated to climate change, to galvanise global momentum and action.

This too, demonstrated the increasing recognition of the urgency and need to move forward in seeking an effective and truly global solution that involves the negotiation of delicate balances between often conflicting sets of social, economic and environmental issues.

The political back-drop, of course, is the alarming slow-down in global economic growth, and the Euro-zone debt crisis, posing an additional set of challenges in seeking global solutions that ensure that the burden of responsibility for responding to climate change and its impacts are fairly and equitably distributed.

And indeed, there are encouraging signs. The statement from the recent G8 Summit with a recommitment to fulfilling the promise made in Copenhagen in 2009, of mobilizing USD 100 billion, is encouraging.

It is also encouraging that the negotiations under the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action are characterized by a new willingness on the part of all Parties to move beyond entrenched negotiating positions and unconstructive rhetoric and engage with the challenges of achieving economic development in an increasingly carbon constrained world. This represents a significant and hopeful step forward.

The deliberations over these 2 days are an important opportunity to assess how best to move the process forward. We must ensure that COP 19 in Warsaw is able to build on the significant achievements of Durban in 2011, and Qatar in 2012, and deliver the foundation that will make it possible to deliver progress on implementation NOW, and on the negotiation of the FUTURE post 2020 international climate change regime.

In conclusion, I wish you fruitful discussion. It is also my belief that you will find time out of your busy schedules to visit some of the beautiful sites and attractions of the Mother City, as Cape Town is called.

I thank you all.