



**KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY
HON JEFF RADEBE, MINISTER OF ENERGY
ON THE SCHOOL ENERGY DAY EVENT HELD IN EAST LONDON,
BUFFALO CITY METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITY IN THE EASTERN
CAPE PROVINCE.**

17 APRIL, 2019

Programme Director: Cllr Skuta Alfred Mtsi, Speaker of Buffalo City
Metropolitan Municipality

Cllr Xola Pakati, Executive Mayor of Buffalo City Metropolitan Municipality

Cllr Zoliswa Matana, Deputy Executive Mayor of Buffalo City Metropolitan
Municipality

Councillors,

School principals,

Educators,

Government officials,

Our partners

Distinguished learners present,

Ladies and Gentlemen.

Good morning

I am pleased to be here in Buffalo City this morning to engage young people on
different energy related issues but with a focus on career opportunities that can

be accessed within the sector. The Department has a mandate to ensure secure and sustainable provision of energy for socioeconomic development. South Africa continues to be aspiring nation despite the challenges.

The School Energy Day event is an effective platform to engage young South Africans on career opportunities in the energy sector, bursaries, human capital programmes and dissemination of general energy information. The Department recognized that there is a need to nurture young people to fulfil their career development in the energy sector. This School energy day event is about bringing more awareness to you on the different career path that you can follow. Today learners gathered here will get an opportunity to engage the Department and other organizations on career opportunities. I hope the different carriers in the energy sector will motivate you to be part of this sector.

Our investment in the green economy initiatives such as the Renewable Energy Independent Power Producers Programme has boosted youth employment particularly during the construction, engineering, operation and maintenance phases. Large numbers of young people exited the education system prematurely and possess no professional or technical skills, making them effectively unemployable. We also know graduates are employable as compared to those without qualifications. With the growing renewable energy sector here in the Eastern Cape, skilled labour is required to drive implementation of projects in the sector across the value chain such as manufacturing, construction, engineering, project design, operation and maintenance.

Access to higher learning institutions until recently was a serious challenge affecting young people particularly those from rural and township areas. The single most important investment any country can make is the development of its people. The NDP outlines South Africa's education vision that by 2030 South

Africans should have access to education and training of the highest quality possible, producing significantly improved learning outcomes. Since 2018, government committed itself to ensure free higher education and training to first year students from households with a gross combined annual income of up to R350 000. This is, indeed, good news for all of you.

South Africa faces a shortage of critical skills that are significant to drive the economy. Transformation of the economy can be eased if our youths can take education seriously and have courage to follow career paths that are scarce such as engineers, artisans, project managers, environmentalists, technologist and other skills that remain scarce in the economy. As a nation, we have a responsibility to encourage our youths to focus on Mathematics, Science and Technology in order to grow and transform the South African economy.

I am also proud that the province of Eastern Cape has achieved the overall most improvement pass rate of 5.6 percent from 65 percent in 2017 to 70.6 in 2018. I applaud teachers, learners and parents who worked tirelessly to achieve these results. I would like to encourage our learners to begin with the preparation for the Senior Certificate Examination now so that Eastern Cape can improve from the 2018 matric results.

I would like to encourage our youth to volunteer to participate in different government programmes such as energy efficiency, operation Khanyisa, global warming and environmental degradation. The need for energy safety, environment conservation and energy efficiency conscious society has become increasingly important. While we have stabilized our energy challenges, we must not neglect our responsibilities of being energy efficient nation. We must reduce amount of energy we use by choosing energy-efficient appliances and services, and ensuring we do not waste energy.

We should emphasise the role of education as a vector in changing behaviour, attracting and retaining people to work in the energy sector and ensure that you as learners when you take further training, you consider energy related programmes as your first choice.

Caring government anywhere in the world always looks at the needs of its citizenry. That is why we are also giving pairs of shoes to our children so that they can have the dignity when they go to schools.

Let me conclude by saying that we all have a role to play in transforming our country. It is not only a responsibility of government to ensure socio-economic development. I thank all our learners, presenters, partners and exhibitors who heeded our call and supported us in making today a success. I appreciate the support from the Department of Basic Education, Buffalo City Metropolitan Municipality and our educators for their contribution in organizing the event.

I thank you.

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