



**MINERAL RESOURCES AND ENERGY
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

**OPENING REMARKS BY THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF
MINERAL RESOURCES AND ENERGY**

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**AT THE AFRICA OIL WEEK, WOMEN IN OIL AND GAS
BRUNCH 2023,**

11TH OCTOBER, CAPE TOWN

Honourable Minister Gwede Mantashe,
Deputy Ministers,
Premiers,
Captains of Industry,
Social Partners,
Ladies and gentlemen,

Introduction

Good morning and welcome to this remarkable gathering at Africa Oil Week. I am deeply honored to stand before you today, not only as the Deputy Minister of Mineral Resources and Energy but as a staunch advocate for diversity and gender equality in the oil and gas sector. Today, we celebrate the incredible women who have carved a path in this industry, and we chart a course for an even more inclusive and prosperous future for South Africa.

In the energy sector, we often find ourselves amidst towering structures and complex machinery. The oil and gas sector, in particular, has been traditionally dominated by men, but it's high time we recognize that the landscape is changing, and changing fast.

Women are not just knocking on the door; they are already in the room, making significant contributions to this vital industry.

South Africa's energy sector is at the heart of our nation's economic development and transformation. It is the lifeblood that powers our homes, industries, and innovations. As we embark on a journey towards a more sustainable and inclusive energy future, we must ensure that this transformation is both equitable and inclusive.

Empowering women in the oil and gas sector is not just a matter of equality; it's a matter of sound economic sense. Research consistently shows that diverse teams lead to better decision-making and improved business outcomes. When women are empowered in this sector, our nation benefits from their perspectives, creativity, and expertise.

I stand before you today with a clear message: South Africa needs more women in leadership positions within the oil and gas industry.

We need women not just as participants but as drivers of change, innovation, and sustainability.

As we look ahead, we must address the barriers that have hindered women's advancement in this field for far too long. We need to ensure that opportunities are available at every level, from exploration to production, from management to policymaking. Let us actively work towards creating a workplace culture that values diversity and inclusion, where every voice is heard, and every talent is recognized.

Mentorship and support networks are essential in this journey. I urge women in the oil and gas sector to seek out mentors and be mentors. Let us create a community that shares knowledge, experiences, and opportunities.

Together, we can empower the next generation of women leaders who will continue to break barriers and shape the future of this industry.

Furthermore, we must invest in education and skills development to bridge the gender gap in technical and engineering roles. South Africa has a wealth of untapped talent, and we must provide the training and opportunities needed to fully realize this potential.

As we explore new frontiers in energy, including renewable sources and green technologies, women should play a pivotal role in driving innovation. The transition to a more sustainable future demands fresh ideas, and women have a unique perspective to offer in shaping the clean energy landscape of South Africa.

In closing, I want to leave you with a vision. Imagine a South Africa where the oil and gas sector is a beacon of diversity, where women hold leadership positions across the board, where their voices resound in boardrooms and policy discussions, and where their contributions drive our nation's energy future.

Let us be inspired by the trailblazing women who have already made their mark in this industry and commit ourselves to empowering the women who will follow in their footsteps. Together, we will build a South Africa where the energy sector is not just a source of power but a source of empowerment for all.

Thank you and let us embark on this journey together with determination and hope. South Africa's energy future is brighter with the full participation of its women.

I thank you.