



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

**REMARKS BY THE HONOURABLE
MINISTER OF MINERAL RESOURCES AND ENERGY
MR GWEDE MANTASHE (MP)**

**AFRICA OIL WEEK
CAPE TOWN ICC, 10 OCTOBER 2023**

Programme Director,

Deputy President of the Republic of South Africa, His Excellency
Paul Mashatile

Your Excellencies, Ministers present here

Deputy Minister of Mineral Resources and Energy, Dr Nobuhle
Nkabane

Captains of Industries

Members of the Investment Community

Distinguished Guests

Members of the Media

Let me start by expressing our **concern** in the fact that as I stand on this stage to engage you on the development of **oil and gas**, there is another stage set for the **“green energy summit”** in the same conference centre.

Notwithstanding the reasons to do so by the organisers, we are troubled by this arrangement because it **worsens the existing polemic debate** about energy technologies.

We continue to appeal to the ***energy sector to organise itself*** and convene ***one energy conference*** – as it is done with the ***Mining Indaba*** – where delegates can meaningfully talk about the **energy sector in detail**.

Moving to the business of the day, let me welcome you all to South Africa and to this year's ***Africa Oil Week*** convened under the theme ***“Maximising Africa’s Natural Resources in the Global Energy Transition”***.

There is no doubt that Africa is well endowed with ***Oil and Gas deposits***, as it is *endowed with **critical minerals***. The **discoveries of oil in Namibia and Côte d'Ivoire**, and the discoveries of **gas in South Africa** have not only proven Africa's endowment but have also raised the demand for Africa's renewed investment in refining capacity.

It is however deplorable that, despite this endowment, the developments in the globe are such that Africa does not benefit from this endowment. This calls on African leaders, business, and all delegates at this conference to have a frank debate on how best we can ensure that Africa and her people benefit from these deposits.

Noting that 82% of energy sources in the world are from what is today described as “**fossil fuels**” and that any transition from high carbon emissions to low carbon emissions will have an impact on these fossil fuels, how we manage that transition is an issue that this conference must grapple with.

Because of the **extent of energy poverty** in the African continent, Africa needs to think carefully about its path to a low carbon economy and not neglect what it is endowed with.

As we transition from the old energy technologies to the new, we must follow the Chinese example of ascertaining **the reliability, resilience, and the efficiency of the new energy technologies** before we can unbundle old technologies.

Programme director, let me take this opportunity to express our observation and concern that **climate change is rapidly being weaponised against the least developed**. Instead of considering the realities facing each country, climate change standards are set by the developed nations and imposed on the developing nations.

Foreign funded Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) are also being used to weaponise environmental preservation to block development in developing nations. This is a reality that we are faced with in South Africa, hence we demand that these **NGOs be registered** and be made to declare their source of funding as it is done with political parties.

We have further observed that, following Russia's decision to stop the flow of natural gas, **some developed nations have reverted back to fossil fuels**, with some reopening their decommissioned coal generating power stations.

There is a growing number of developed nations, which we can refer to, that are beginning to admit that the **intermittent nature of renewable energy demands baseload** energy for security, which is primarily a function of *fossil fuels*, including uranium to generate nuclear energy. For instance, Sweden, which had taken a decision to “*be 100% dependent on renewables*”, has abandoned that goal based on science and reality that confronts them.

We are convinced that the **development of Africa's oil and gas sector** will be the game changer for Africa as it was the case for developed nations. Any further delay in this regard prolongs the acceleration of the continent's energy security and undermines our concerted efforts aimed at eradicating energy poverty.

Reality of the matter is that **Africa cannot continue being a beggar of the world and an import destination** for refined petroleum products while it is blessed with a plethora of oil and gas reserves. There is no better time than now for **Africa to pull resources together to facilitate the funding** for the exploration of these natural resources and expand its refining capacity.

Let us work together and drive Africa's economic development through the **processing and beneficiation** of the natural resources it is endowed with.

There can be **no green future without Africa's minerals**, hence, we have started a discussion on the **creation of value in countries of origin** to change Africa's economic situation.

Another discussion that is beginning to gain traction is about the **expansion of the Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG)** industry on the African continent as a quick and effective solution to clean cooking and space heating. Success in this regard, necessitates that Africa identify strategic options that we can adopt to ensure that the LPG can serve Africa as a bridge between its immediate energy needs and our long-term sustainable goals.

In closing, let us promote ***Intra-Africa trade on our natural resources***, ensure energy security, address energy poverty, and speak in one voice about Africa's path to a low carbon economy.

I thank you.