



Member of the Executive Council for  
economic, small business development,  
tourism and environmental affairs  
FREE STATE PROVINCE

**MEC's ADDRESS DURING THE OCCASION OF THE  
FREE STATE GLOBAL INVESTORS TRADE BRIDGE  
OPENING CEREMONY  
03 OCTOBER 2016, BLOEMFONTEIN**

**Honourable Premier of the Free State, Mr. Ace Magashule  
Minister Lindiwe Zulu  
All MECs present  
Our distinguished guests and friends from different countries  
DG and all HODs present  
Our Executive Mayors and Mayors present  
Government Officials  
All business people and prospective investors in attendance  
Members of the media  
Ladies and Gentlemen**

In the same way that we asserted last year when we hosted the inaugural Free State Global Investors Trade Bridge, we once again find it compelling Honourable Premier to acknowledge your foresight and unquenchable desire to realize an all-inclusive and sustainable economy of our province. We are truly delighted to be associated with this 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of the Free State Global Investors Trade Bridge because of the positive spin-offs it represent going forward!

Given the historical background of the provincial economy, which has been dependent on primary sectors such as mining and agriculture, the current trends has seen the latter changing where now the economy is more reliant on secondary and tertiary sectors such as manufacturing, export, and to a large extend, the service sector.

Again, acknowledging that trade and investment represent the cornerstone of economic growth and job creation, the Executive Council lead by the Premier conceptualized the Free State Global Investors Trade Bridge (FSGITB) with the aim to attract and retain investment stretching far beyond the borders of the province, of the country and that of the African continent. The 2016 FSGITB is a business platform where local business people will interact and share business ideas with international counterparts with the aim of clinching business deals and contracts

Again, Free State is the place to be for business people, investors, traders who are looking for opportunities to grow their businesses and contribute to the economy of the province and the country.

**The main objectives of the FSGITB are:**

- **To facilitate effective implementation of the various agreements and MOUs signed between the Free State Province and countries of the world**
- **To unlock trade and investment opportunities between the Free State province and the rest of the world.**
- **To present the progress and achievements of the 2015 FSGITB, and**
- **This year the province will launch the success of partnerships that was derived from the 2015 FSGITB**

We will be pleased as well if this FSGITB platform can contribute in reversing the current trend of over-reliance in terms of importing of goods as a country. Exporting in this regard becomes more crucial for economic growth and expansion of global market as it means more production, more jobs and more revenue.

In comparison to last year where we only had 4 countries participating, this year sees 13 Countries participating and they include China, Russia, Belarus, Angola, Madeira, Turkey, India, Rwanda, Bulgaria, Cuba, Portugal, Mozambique, and France.

This year, the focus will be on 4 priority sectors namely; Mining, Agro-processing, Green-economy and Tourism as part of the Free State Growth and Development Strategy. The key focus will be in terms of renewable energy but also linked to job creation.

There are different platforms for the coming three days to afford all participants to talk business and share ideas. Match making is one of the platforms where businesses are matched with investors. This will provide businesses with exposure and access to markets.

The FSGITB will be characterized by product exhibition, scheduled Business-2-Business meetings, excursions, factory and company visits and optional business trips to different parts of the Free State Province.

“JWALE KE NAKO YA KOTULO” JWALE KE NAKO YA KOTULO” JWALE KE NAKO YA KOTULO”

Ladies and gentleman, there is no other better time than now for the Free State business to send a very strong message to investors' community that there is no better place ready for investment than the Free State.

Thank you.

**END.**

"JWALE KE NAKO YA KOTULO" JWALE KE NAKO YA KOTULO" JWALE KE NAKO YA KOTULO"