

**OVERVIEW BY THE MEC FOR FINANCE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM, MR PV MKHATSHWA, MPL, DURING DELIBERATIONS WITH THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON PREMIER'S OFFICE; FINANCE; ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM ON QUARTERS 1 AND 2 OF 2021-2022 PERFORMANCE REPORTS OF THE DEPARTMENT AND ITS PUBLIC ENTITIES HELD VIRTUALLY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS**

**Thursday, 18 November 2021**

Chairperson and Members of the Portfolio Committee;

**Good Morning/ San'bonani!**

1. Chairperson, thank you very much for affording us this opportunity, to engage with the Committee and deliberate on the **Quarters 1 and 2 Performance Reports** of the 2020-2021 financial year of the Department and its public entities. For Quarter 1 Performance Report of the 2021-2022 financial year, we will provide progress reports on the House Resolutions, as the Committee requested.
2. We are once again requested to appear before this critically important platform to account and respond to salient questions about the performance of the Department and its Public Entities.
3. As a matter of principle, we are unwavering in our resolve to serve with humility and integrity, and this we do with tactical awareness that South Africa and her people needs servant leadership, in order to achieve its strategic goals as contained in the National Development Plan vision 2030.

4. Chairperson, as a norm, I am accompanied by the acting Head of Department, **Ms Gugu Mashiteng**, Chairpersons of the Boards and CEOs of our Public Entities, as well as their respective senior management teams.
5. In a shortwhile, I will provide you with a **progress report on governance issues**, which will give you better clarity. And once I have concluded my *Political Overview*, the acting HOD and CEOs will present their detailed reports of the performance of the Department and Entities.
6. Chairperson, as I earlier indicated, we still have a number of **critical vacant positions within the Department and our Public Entities**, which has necessitated acting appointments. Our last recruitment drive to fill the vacant position of the Head of Department did not bear positive fruits, as **we did not find a suitable candidate**. The post has since been **re-advertised** over the past weekend of 14 November, with the closing date of 03 December 2021. We hope that we will this time, be able to attract and appoint a suitable person. In the interim, Ms Mashiteng will continue to act as the Head of Department.
7. All our Entities now have Boards in place, including the new Entity, **the Mpumalanga Nkomazi SEZ**. However, **MER's Board is led by an acting chairperson, in the name of Ms Gaylene Deiner**, following the resignation of Mr Eric Mbele as chairperson in November 2020. We will soon appoint the chairperson of the Board, once all necessary consultations are concluded.

8. And following the resignation of Mr Bheki Mlambo, as the CEO of MER, at the end of October 202, we have **commenced in earnest, with the recruitment drive to appoint the new CEO** for the Entity.
9. Recruitment advertisements have already closed on 05 November 2021, in this regard, and the shortlisting process will be concluded soon. In the interim, we have appointed **Ms Carla Bastos** as the acting CEO of MER.
10. The same goes at MEGA, as it is headed by an acting CEO, following the **extension of Mr Isaac Mahlangu's acting appointment**. This was done because we are still awaiting concurrence of the Executive Council on the appointment of the successful candidate. MEGA now also has a full-term Board, which is **chaired by the young and energetic Mr Thabo Motau**.
11. With regards to the MTPA, we are happy that there is now stability, as we have **appointed a full-term Board under the chairpersonship of yet another young and energetic, Mr Victor Mashego**. The MTPA is our only Entity which is not plagued by acting appointments at strategic positions of chairperson and CEO.
12. Coming to the Mpumalanga Nkomazi SEZ, we can report that we have now **appointed a Board** for the Entity, which is **chaired by Mr Siphso Zikode**. The six-member Board **comprises three (3) representatives of the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition, and one (1) representative each**, from the our

Department, Ehlanzeni District Municipality, and the Nkomazi Local Municipality.

13. We have further **appointed Mr Sabelo Mabuyakhulu** – on secondment from the Department of Human Settlements – as the acting CEO of the SEZ Entity; and **Mr Mduduzi Vilakazi** – as the acting Chief Financial Officer of the Entity. In addition, the SEZ Entity has got the **Project Management Unit which is staffed by three (3) officials**.
14. Chairperson, we should indicate that the **SEZ Entity is yet to be listed as a public entity**. For this to happen, there was a requirement that the **Board should approve the Entity's 5-year Strategic Plan and Organisational structure**, which should in turn be submitted to the Minister of Trade, Industry and Competition for approval.
15. We can report that the **Entity's newly-appointed Board, has since approved both the required documents**, and have subsequently submitted them to the Minister for approval. Once approved, the development process of the SEZ will be on full swing.
16. Chairperson, one other issue I deem crucial to report on, is on the **Barberton Makhonjwa Mountains World Heritage Site**. We have since **appointed the MTPA as the Management Authority** of the World Heritage Site, which is also in the process of developing an **Integrated Management Plan** for the Site. We hope to conclude the Plan by March 2022.

17. With regards to the planned technology parks, we can report that the general plan for the development of the **Petro-chemical Industrial Technology Park in Secunda, has been approved** by the Surveyor General; and the Department, working with the local Municipality, has managed to get the **identified land for the Park transferred into the name of the Govan Mbeki Local Municipality.**
18. Regarding the planned Forestry Industrial Technology Park in Sabie, there are unfortunately, **delays in the completion of the Statutory Compliance requirements** due to a number of objections against the proposed development. We, however, continue to work with our sister Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, Land and Environmental Affairs, and other relevant stakeholders, to resolve the matter.
19. The construction work at the **Mpumalanga International Fresh Produce Market is progressing very well.** If all goes according to plan, the first phase of the Market will be completed during the first half of 2022.
20. Chairperson, in a nutshell, despite a few challenges there and there, one is pleased that our implementing agents – our Public Entities – continue to perform the work we delegated to them with zoom and zeal.
21. The **MTPA** continues to market and promote the Province as the tourist destination of choice; the **MER** continues to regulate the gambling and liquor industries, including collecting revenue due to the

fiscus. **MEGA** also strives to do its part, as it endeavours to provide financial support to small businesses and attract investment into the Province, amongst others.

22. Like I indicated earlier, the acting HOD and CEOs will provide further details, once I have completed my talk.
23. Once more, thank you very much for affording us an opportunity to engage with the Committee, on our work as *the dedt* family, which includes our Entities.
24. Accountability and transparency are the fundamental principles which underpins our work as public representatives, and we will always make sure that we appear before the Portfolio Committee, and accordingly report on the work we are undertaking.
25. ***Let's grow the economy of Mpumalanga together!***

**I thank you Chairperson!**