

WELCOME REMARKS BY THE HEAD OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM, Ms. FI SERAKALALA DURING THE OCASSION TO CELEBRATE THE WORLD CONSUMER RIGHTS DAY 2025 HELD AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MPUMALANGA, CITY OF MBOMBELA

Thursday, 13 March 2025

Programme Facilitators, Dr Maanda Dagada and Ms. Cynthia Moshaba;
MEC for Economic Development and Tourism, Ms. Makhozazane Masilela;

Acting Deputy Commissioner and Acting Commissioner of the National Consumer Commission, Mr. Hardin Ratshisusu;

Moderator of the session, Ms. Karabo Motaung-Mohlala;

Our esteemed panelists;

Officials from government and the University of Mpumalanga;

Distinguished guests;

Members of the media;

Ladies and gentlemen;

Avuxeni!

- 1. Thank you very much for this rare opportunity, as we converge to mark the celebration of the 2025 World Consumer Rights Day.**
- 2. My role is just to welcome you all, to our serene and picturesque Province, Mpumalanga – The Place of the Rising Sun!**

3. Let me start by **expressing our utmost appreciation to the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Mpumalanga, Professor Thoko Mayekiso**, for agreeing that UMP can partner with government, in celebrating such an auspicious day.
4. We also thank the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition and its Agency, the National Consumer Commission, for choosing our Province as the host Province for this year's celebration.
5. We are, thus, thankful that you have joined us this morning, as we come to **reflect on the critical role consumer rights play in shaping a fair and transparent marketplace**.
6. Let me hasten to indicate that the significance of the **World Consumer Rights Day** will be enunciated by our MEC, Ms. Masilela, when she takes the podium after my Welcome Remarks.
7. And as part of creating awareness about consumer rights, we will have two (2) panel discussions, which will focus on two topics.
8. The first topic of discussion would be '**Competition Issues in the Food Value Chain – From the farm to the Tables of Consumers**' whilst the second one would be '**Food Safety in the Food Value Chain – From the farm to the Tables of Consumers**'.

9. Ladies and gentlemen, you are all welcome to this event, which is one of the many planned events to celebrate this year's World Consumer Rights Day.
10. Programme Facilitators, the limelight is not on me, but on our leader, MEC Masilela, who will expatiate on the significance of the day we have converged about this morning.
11. I wish all of us thoughtful and fruitful discussions, so that we can share insights and explore how we can further strengthen the relationship between businesses and consumers.
12. Let's use this opportunity to celebrate the strides we have made, and to **commit ourselves to a future where consumer rights remain at the heart of everything we do!**
13. Once more, thank you so much for accepting our invitation, and for gracing this event.
14. Let the conversations begin!

Hinkomu!