

Good morning distinguished guests
Partners – Rand Refinery, EJP, NQ
Graduates
Members of the media and
Colleagues

It gives me great pleasure to stand before you today to celebrate the achievement of our graduates from our Enterprise Development Programme. As I stand here today, I am inspired by the success and achievement of all the business owners present here.

Over the past year, SADPMR has demonstrated a keen interest in investing in and supporting entrepreneurs who exhibit the drive and ambition to start their own businesses.

When we first partnered with Rand Refinery, NQ Jewelers and Ekurhuleni Jewellery Project, to get this programme off the ground, our objective was to provide business development support, mentorship and other assistance to emerging or existing entrepreneurs and SMMEs.

As SADPMR, we know that more can be achieved if we partner with others. As government, together with our partners in private sector we have an ability to effect so much change while contributing to the sustainability of small businesses through guiding and encouraging them to take charge of their own development.

I believe we can all agree that small businesses are an essential contributor towards a healthy economy. These businesses create a competitive environment, provide vital employment opportunities and revitalize our communities even through the most challenging times.

At SADPMR, we believe that enterprise development is one of the most effective ways of delivering sustainable, broad-based economic growth in local economies. It is the best way of empowering people by giving them access to the essential skills to better their lives. Further to this, delivering great business opportunities to high potential entrepreneurs enables businesses to become meaningful enterprises that create jobs and develop much needed skills. NQ Jewelers is the living example of this. NQ Jewelers can bear testimony to the fact that if you are committed to achieving something, the sky is the limit. Just two ago, we auctioned an art piece for R1,5 million, which is a product of our project.

Upon this phase of graduation, one requires continuous learning, equipping oneself for never ending demand and challenges of enterprise building. Success is target that should always be moving towards.

It would be considerably difficult to run such a programme without a solid, reliable partnership with Rand Refinery, NQ Jewelers and Ekurhuleni Jewellery Project. They provide the relevant support and skills required by entrepreneurs who want to build or take their existing business to the next level.

We believe that by partnering with right organizations, we can and will make a real difference in South Africa and achieve our mandate. More importantly, this enables us to contribute towards South Africa's growth implementation of the National Development Plan as set out by our Leader in government.

The National Development Plan is framework that should bring government, business and people together. It must work to the benefit of all the people of South Africa. The President in his 2022 SONA address mentioned that private sector should partner with government to create jobs. Large businesses should partner with emerging enterprises to allow for the culture of inclusive growth, creating an enterprise development framework that can only make this country stronger.

Before I conclude let me honor and acknowledge one of the 18 candidates, Mr. Bongani January who passed on during the programme. Had he not departed, I am quite certain that he would be celebrating in this wonderful occasion with us. May his soul rest in peace.

May each and every one of you continue to be pioneers in business and wish you all of the best for the future. With those words I would like to say - Congratulations to our graduates.

I thank you.