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YOUTH IN BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

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An enabling environment for youth economic emancipation requires the involvement of all.

Throughout history, every generation has encountered a watershed moment that would define their legacy. In South Africa the youth has often been at the forefront of such moments and the triumphs of past generations of young people continue to echo through time.

The youth of 1976 faced their watershed when they confronted the murderous apartheid regime and tragically, many young people paid the ultimate price in the fight for democracy and freedom.

This year marks the 47th anniversary of the 16 June 1976 student uprising in Soweto and the actions of young people on that cold winter's day have helped to shape our democracy and our freedom.

Following the advent of democracy in 1994, the new democratic government declared 16 June as National Youth Day and June as the Youth Month. As we look forward to Youth Day and Youth Month many people might well ponder whether democracy has benefitted the youth of South Africa.

It is indeed a fair and valid question, which cannot be answered in a simple way, yet there are a number of absolutes. The majority of the youth of '76 lived in fear and were routinely harassed and brutalised. The youth of today live in a democracy which upholds the rights of



Asanda Luwaca
Executive Chairperson

all and opens doors to a better tomorrow. The youth of today live in a country, which abounds with opportunities, which can be unlocked through dedication, hard work and collaboration of all sectors of society. Since 1994, successive administrations have worked to ensure that young people have the tools and opportunities to change their lived realities, through policy and active inclusion of youth in the mainstream economy.

The 2023 Youth Month will focus on opportunities for young people in the private sector, public sector, academia and civil society across the spectrum, including: entrepreneurship, skills development and youth service opportunities.

As government, we are working to accelerate youth development programmes, and we have created opportunities for young people to gain the much necessary work experience by granting access to internship programmes.

The Presidential Youth Employment Intervention creates new pathways into employment for our young people by ensuring that the youth gain the right skills to enable them to not only locate their desired opportunities, but for them to also be self-starters and create their desired opportunities.

As the National Youth Development Agency tasked with ensuring the inclusion of young people in all forms for employment, have also opened employment opportunities through the Expanded Public Works Programmes, Community Works Programme and the Harambee Youth Employment Accelerator.



Waseem Carrim
Chief Executive Officer

The opportunities presented to young people are also anchored on activism which enable young people to be activists which through the National Youth Service contribute to the upliftment of their communities.

The SAYouth.mobi network also offers access to learning and work opportunities for young unemployed South Africans. It helps youth to connect to work through a range of services and work readiness training opportunities.

Government has also put measures in place to create a favourable and supportive environment for youth to become successful entrepreneurs. The NYDA Grant Programme provides young entrepreneurs with an opportunity to access both financial and non-financial business development support to enable them to establish or grow their businesses.

We call on the youth to explore the many opportunities that are available for us to create sustainable economic growth for all South Africans.

Together let us awaken the spirit of 1976 where young people were actively involved in defining their future and the country they wanted. It is through the collective efforts of all socio-economic stakeholders, that we will indeed reach the ideal state of economic emancipation for all. Let us awaken the spirit of patriotism and volunteerism in our youth.

Together we can ensure that the democratic gains we have made since 1994 are sustained and further developed, especially as we look ahead to 30 Years of Freedom.