



public works

Department:
Public Works
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Issued; Chief Directorate: Communication

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MEDIA RELEASE

CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY BUILDS DREAMS

Department of Public Works concludes its maiden and a successful campaign of celebrating the National Construction Week 2006 (NCW06) tonight (3 August 2006) with much fanfare and a big bang at a Gala Dinner in Pretoria.

Minister Thoko Didiza addressed various role players, captains of the industry, scholars, politicians who among others took part in a total of 100 events that were held nationwide thanks to the concerted efforts of government, private sector and public entities including the Construction Industry Development Board (CIDB), the Independent Development Trust (IDT), and the Council for the Built Environment (CBE).

The campaign was also characterized by showcasing events such as exhibitions, built environment school competitions and a comprehensive media advertising awareness campaign highlighting construction industry as a career destination of choice – one that is exciting and appealing to young people, hence the slogan – ***“build ya dreams”***.

“I think we have succeeded in igniting the spark” said Minister Didiza. She stated that experiences sustained by comprehensive media plan helped us to raise awareness but also created expectations that were vindicated by the NCW call centre being inundated with young people looking for employment.

Minister seized the moment to challenge the industry to walk the talk. “Let us take these young people on learnership programmes, provide them with bursaries to study further, but most importantly, employ them in line with the slogan of this year’s campaign, of helping them ‘build their dreams’”.

Through the campaign, Minister said that, “we aim to re-affirm the centrifugal role of the built environment in our life, thus I prefer to view CONSTRUCTION AS PART OF OUR CULTURE”. The acquiescence of the sector in the past has helped fuel perceptions of a robust, macho and dirty industry devoid of glamour

and professionalism. The industry overlooked image building and perceptions management as peripheral. Therefore, the Department runs initiatives such as the NCW, 2014 Youth Foundation, the Military Skills Development, and other learnership programmes to demystify such perceptions and attracting the youth to the construction industry.

Government views construction industry as a national asset given the infrastructural requirements that are necessary for social development and service delivery for economic growth.

The first quarter report of 2006 indicated that this industry contributes 13.7% to GDP.

“The current boom in the industry provides us, both government and the industry, with an opportunity to demonstrate the extent to which this industry is both willing and able to transform itself given the correct enabling environment,” affirmed the Minister.

However, the Minister Didiza has emphasized the fact that the industry is still faced with huge challenges of succession of the current crops of engineers that are aging and is asking the industry to come full on board. “The industry needs twice as many skilled people as it currently has. Therefore, my appeal remains that let us invest in training and skills development while creating an industry with a reputation for high quality performance and effective project delivery”

“We need a strong economy to generate employment but we also need a diverse industry that is successful, competitive and secured to drive that growth.”

Minister also stated that in the next year, we shall hope to see a greater involvement by the civil society.

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