

**THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS, Ms
IPELENG HENDRIETTA BOGOPANE-ZULU, MP,
SPEAKS ON THE 4TH ANNUAL NATIONAL
CONSTRUCTION WEEK CAMPAIGN ON YFM
RADIO**

DATE: Tuesday 14 July 2009

1. The National Construction Week is the brainchild of the Department of Public Works and was conceived to encourage collaborative efforts between the government and the construction industry to improve the image of the industry as relevant to reconstruction and development needs of the country
2. It is primarily a public relations campaign calling on everybody to pause and recognize the significance, relevance and contribution of the industry in economic growth (i.e. GDP, job creation, foreign exchange, exporting and importing), social development (public service delivery, infrastructure, aesthetics etc) and human resources transformation (contractor development, career choices, skills development, women contractor development, youth in construction, training and development etc)
3. Most industrialized nations in the world observe the National Construction Week mainly because they understand and know the value of the sector in bettering lives and promoting development. Last year the Department was invited to

participate in the event in Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia and we were happy with what we saw, namely that:

- a. Construction is highly regarded as a national asset alongside gas, telecommunications, tourism and motor sport industries in that country
 - b. Existing and new construction projects such as the famous Kuala Lumpur Twin Towers, and the modern city of Putrajaya which is currently under construction, are showed off as the national pride of Malaysia
 - c. Millions of dollars are involved in the commoditization of construction products and services wherein the Malaysians export their best expertise to other countries, for a premium
 - d. As a result of the maturity of their construction industry, development is discernible everywhere in the country as more suburbs, townships, modes of transport, hotels, commercial properties spring up everywhere
4. Since 1994, the ANC-led government identified the construction industry in South Africa as essential to the achievement of Reconstruction and Development goals including Housing, jobs, infrastructure development, skills and public service delivery improvement. The relationship between government and the industry is historical

- as the government relied on the industry to meet its goals of development
5. Today the government has made available more than R787 billion in the next three to five years to develop infrastructure in the country and the benefits are immense and include, but not limited to:
 - a. Successful hosting of world sporting events making South Africa one amongst the best in the world
 - b. Job creation and job retention. For every one million rand invested in the industry, certain number of jobs are either created or saved. The infrastructure sector of the Expanded Public Works Programme contributes many jobs
 - c. Government has harnessed the competency of the industry to bring about necessary infrastructure in our communities. Today government on daily basis launches and officially opens infrastructure projects such as police stations, magistrate courts, clinics, hospitals, roads, water and sanitation projects in the previously disadvantaged communities to boost their asset worth but also to improve service delivery and alleviate poverty by bringing these services closer to the people. The biggest police station in terms of rand value in the country is being built at Diepsloot (R60 million)

d. Since we started with the NCW campaign, we have given bursaries to hundreds of students prompting them to follow careers in construction related disciplines. Many women have entered the industry thanks to government initiatives and other support. The R900 million Kimberley New Generation Prison was jointly being undertaken by Grinaker-LTA with Keren Khula Construction, a black woman-owned enterprise on 70:30 basis.

6. In line with the original thinking of government on the transformation of the industry, the NCW has in the past celebrated themes that were reflective of government's aims in as far as the performance of the industry was concerned.

a. 2006 – Youth in Construction

b. 2007 – Women in Construction

c. 2008 – Emerging contractors

In 2009, the theme is generic and takes cognizant of the role of the industry in our everyday life as we, as a country, work hard to renew the moral, cultural, ethical, political and social life of the nation, hence the theme: **LAYING CONCRETE FOUNDATIONS IN THE ERA OF RENEWAL – The Role of the Construction Industry in economic growth, social development and human resources transformation**

7. We have lined up certain activities to celebrate the role of the construction industry. Also as part of the celebration of the Mandela Day, the Department under the aegis of its Corporate Social Responsibility function has identified the renovations of two facilities for the disabled learners in and around Gauteng. The Department will also focus on certain Heritage projects.

We shall also visit the two construction projects at Diepsloot and Kagiso in the West Rand. Both projects are undertaken by the emerging contractor who is a beneficiary of the DPW's Contractor Incubator Programme and they employ the locals and the youth under the National Youth Service initiative, using labour intensive guidelines of the Expanded Public Works Programme.

Like in the year before, we are participating in the Youth in Construction Exposition with CIDB and the representatives of the Construction Industry in Gauteng and the Week will culminate with awards to honour small contractors who undertook our social development projects such as the eradication of schools built with mud & other undesirable materials.

8. In terms of progress to date, and in preparation for the launch of the NCW, we have done the following:

- a. Launched the campaign nationally on 08 July
- b. Initiated the advertisement campaign on most media including YFM
- c. Aligned the NCW to the Mandela Day celebrations
- d. Invited the other spheres of government and the private sector to take part

9. Going into the future, the Department would like to continue with the campaign but would equally like to see an increased involvement of the private sector. It has also been resolved that the campaign will permanently have part of its focus on Youth and youth development irrespective of the theme. That is because the issue of skills and skills shortage is still with us and the government believes that our youth is a resource to extricate the country out of skills morass we are facing.

