

**Minister of Public Works  
Ms Stella Sigcau  
22 May 2000**

[Back](#)

**Opening Address at the  
PROCSA 2000 International Convention and Property Exhibition**

Chairperson (Mr Anton Musgrave)  
Our keynote deliverer (Mr Cyril Ramaphosa)  
Distinguished guests  
Ladies and Gentlemen

It is indeed an honour and a privilege to participate at the inaugural convention and property exhibition of PROCSA today. It also gives me a sense of comfort that this exhibition is held at a time when better conditions are forecast for the construction industry.

Our Country has moved a long way from its polarised past prior to 1994, to a Country that has a major role to play not only in Southern Africa, but internationally as well. The South African voice is heard putting its point over a number of issues – from promoting peace and stability in the Continent – to the question of the cancellation of Debt for the Poor Countries – to questions like the fighting of Poverty in Africa, and issues like HIV / AIDS.

The links that have been formed with Business and Labour are aimed at making sure that we have a strong and stable economy, that together we fight the spectre of Poverty – and work hard at Job Creation.

South Africa has one of the best developed property industries in the world. We now have an opportunity to build on this and use it to re-balance stake-holding in a South African property industry that is proud of being inclusive, borrowing from the hard experiences of our past to a future that is exemplary of a unified nation. Such a unified nation will afford opportunities to all, very mindful of where we come from and where we are going. Rather than being prescriptive with regards to transformation, we would hope that the industry itself, through organisations such as PROCSA, could take initiatives to address the racially skewed property ownership and property practitionership in the country.

As you know, government is the largest property owner in the southern hemisphere, to a value of about R120 billion. My Department has embarked on Public-Private Partnerships such as the Asset Procurement and Operating Partnership System (APOPS) within the built environment and we are looking forward to improved procedures in securing similar partnerships as well as including the property industry. My Director-General was due to meet with the property industry last Friday, but to accommodate a number of important players in the industry, the meeting had unfortunately to be postponed.

These efforts are being undertaken because of our firm belief that there is a huge scope for the property industry to play a positive role in placing the government asset portfolio on a steady footing, while taking cognisance of market trends and impact in the property industry. We therefore extend a hand to the industry to assist us in putting in place a proper framework to support delivery of government services.

I believe that you all agree with me that our collective input, consultation and co-operation on matters relating to the property industry in South Africa, is of the utmost importance in taking the necessary forward steps in broadening our democracy, in improving our economic growth and development.

South Africa undoubtedly needs a property industry capable of fulfilling the reasonable needs of all stakeholders in every facet of property activity. And it applies to commercial, residential and social property activity alike.

It is imperative that membership to an industry council such as PROCSA is representative of all stakeholders. This will ensure that the relevant needs in terms of education and training, information technology, networking and others, is appropriately met.

Sadly so, we have to date experienced fragmentation within the industry. This has in the past led to duplication of effort, to divergent views by different interest groups, to a lack of co-ordination in the education or training and communication within the industry, compounded by limited use of technology opportunities – this is what I believe through PROCSA, you are trying to remedy.

I am glad to acknowledge all groups within the property industry, including careers organisations, property practitioners, property owners, commercial role players, facilities management participants, various related professional associations and our emerging property practitioners and construction bodies, who consistently seek to enhance the performance and contribution of the property industry to investment in our economy, as well as in job creation and skills development.

The government itself, as a prominent participant in the property industry would like to see more visible changes in the way the industry contributes to all levels of training in this sector. The government and the Department of Public Works in particular, is keen to be a partner in the development of human resources.

The other area that is of importance to government is the alteration of the skewed property ownership and control patterns of fixed property, and the creation of opportunities for empowering previously disadvantaged individuals and firms.

The government as a legislator, investor and consumer within the property industry, is keenly awaiting positive movement regarding this area and would like to invite the industry participation in addressing this issue.

Government also wishes to encourage public-private partnerships in the property industry at all levels. We also believe that there are enormous opportunities that exist and initiatives that are about to be announced (like at the Budget Speech on Friday) which will further create unique opportunities between the public and the private sectors. I therefore extend an invitation to plough together, in order that we may all harvest together.

Through the formation of PROCSA, the property industry is on par with developments in the built environment where the legislation for a Council for the Built Environment should soon be before Parliament.

You have yourselves embraced the formation of PROCSA as a proposed solution to create an umbrella body which is inclusive, ensures that diverse needs are accommodated, promotes development of sectoral interests and enhances collective effectiveness. Networking within such an umbrella body increases meaningful opportunities, facilitates the further broadening of a membership base and affords the opportunity of maximised educational efforts.

Please accept my congratulation on all major steps forward that have been within the property industry, and may this industry move with vigour in addressing some of the key challenges that still confront this sector.

It is indeed a pleasure for me to declare this convention open.

I wish you well on the deliberations and am looking forward to be kept informed of your resolutions and future achievements.

Albert Camus has said: "Real generosity toward the future consists in giving all to what is present" – I believe that is the immediate task at hand for this convention, may you have great success.

[top](#)