



Chamber of Mines of South Africa
Putting South Africa First



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MEDIA STATEMENT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CHAMBER OF MINES COMMITS TO ACCELERATED MINE HEALTH AND SAFETY

JOHANNESBURG-The Chamber of Mines as part of the Mine Health and Safety Council (MHSC) tripartite partners actively participated in and led the employer discussions at the Mine Health and Safety Summit held at Birchwood Hotel over the past two days.

Led by its President, Mr Mike Teke and its Vice President and CEO of Harmony Gold, Mr Graham Briggs, the Chamber Office Bearers sympathised with the loved ones of the colleagues who did not return from work in 2014.

The industry has prioritized the health and safety of workers as an integral part of being in business and being good corporate citizens and the sectors moral obligation to do all that is possible to achieve Zero Harm.

The Summit convened under the theme; “Every worker returning from work unharmed every day” by the MHSC and the Department of Mineral Resources, all sector stakeholders reflected on achievements in improving the health and safety of mineworkers in the past 10 years.

Significant progress has been made by the sector in reducing fatalities, improving safety, reducing exposure to dust and noise, reducing TB infection rates, implementing more effective TB/HIV Infection control and treatment programs, adopting best practice to improve health and safety outcomes.

In his report to the Summit, Chairperson of the MHSC and Chief Inspector of Mines, Mr David Msiza recognised the sector’s tireless efforts “towards this historical landmark by reducing mining fatalities from 615 in 1993 to 270 in 2003 and to 93 in 2013”. It was noted that 2014 achievements are an improvement from 2013 by 8%, but is 85% better than 1993.

“The sector also saw a reduction of cases of Noise Induced Hearing Loss (NIHL) from more than 6000 in 2003 to around 1200 in 2013. The mining sector TB rates in the gold sector have also halved in the period under review”, Msiza reported to the Summit.

As part of the Summit the MHSC also launched the Centre of Excellence which will lead the sector efforts on promoting innovation through research and training of mine workers.

“We look forward to the establishment of the Centre of Excellence. We welcome the focus of the Centre beyond health and safety and its alignment with the National Development Plan. We need to reclaim our space as a country that leads in mining innovation and excellence”, said Mike Teke.

The broader vision of the Centre of Excellence seeks to undertake focused and directed activities that will:

- 1) Eliminate exposure to high occupational health and safety risks,
- 2) Improve asset utilisation,
- 3) Facilitate the up-skilling of mine employees, and
- 4) Support the socio-economic opportunities through mining.

Despite the significant improvements made in the past two decades, the sector stakeholders have developed and agreed a renewed set of milestones that will continue this journey to zero harm. These will serve as the blueprint for the sector in its efforts of taking the Zero Harm value forward and to the next phase.

“We are very encouraged by the bold milestones and concrete actions that all stakeholders committed to achieve by working together. The Chamber of Mines and all our member companies regard health and safety as a critical value from the CEOs to all levels in the companies. The milestones for us will not limit us from doing more if it will save the lives of our workers”, said Graham Briggs, Vice President of the Chamber and Champion of the CEO’s Elimination of Fatalities Team at the Chamber.

The Chamber of Mines is greatly encouraged by the inclusivity and cohesion from all stakeholders during the summit, the robust debates are an indication that indeed we all strive for Zero Harm and making sure that every mine worker returns from work unharmed every day.

Ends

Note to Editors: For the full Milestone Document and the presentation by the Chief Inspector of Mines go to www.chamberofmines.org.za

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