

ADDRESS BY MINISTER BLADE NZIMANDE ON THE OCCASION OF THE LAUNCH OF UMFOLOZI TVET COLLEGE – MARITIME ACADEMY (ESIKHAWINI CAMPUS)

6th August 2019

Master of Ceremonies

Minister of Transport, Mr F Mbalula;

Minister of Trade and Industry, Mr E Patel;

Premier of Kwa-Zulu Natal Mr Z. Zikalala, Chairperson of UMfolozi TVET College Council and Council Members, CEO of SAMSA, Mr S. Tilayi and the team; ACEO of SAIMI, Mr O. Mtati and the team; CEO of TETA; Inkosi Dube kanye neNkosi Mkhwanazi; District and Local Mayors and the representatives; Senior officials of the Department; Officials of the KZN Departments of Education and Transport; Officials of uMfolozi TVET College; Trade union representatives; distinguished media delegates; all dignitaries; learners and esteemed guests; ladies and gentlemen;

Sanibonani!

Programme Director, It is an honour and privilege for me to be part of the launch of the uMfolozi TVET College Maritime Academy.

This fitting ceremony takes place at as we celebrate Women's Month under the theme "*25 Years of Democracy: Growing South Africa Together for Women's Emancipation*".

As we launch this Maritime Academy today, let us remember women of all races who marched to the Union Buildings to protest against the discriminatory pass laws which had restricted the movement of black people in the country.

This month should serve as a reminder to all of us of their sacrifices which ushered the democracy that we enjoy today.

The Academy itself has a duty and responsibility to take forward the legacy of the women of 1956 by ensuring that it accepts both women and men, and seeks to promote gender equality.

On the 4th of August, the South African Communist Party also held its annual founding anniversary rally to celebrate and reflect on its 98 years of existence. The rally was held

under the theme: *Forward to socialism: Build a people's economy, Dismantle corporate state capture networks, and Serve the people selflessly!*

On the 28th February this year, 2019, in my capacity as the Minister of Transport, I presided over the Inaugural Maritime Transport Dialogue held at the Southern Sun Elangeni – Maharani Hotel – Durban.

At the conclusion of the dialogue, on 1st March, we declared, among other things, to work with the Departments of Basic Education, Higher Education and Training; and Science and Innovation, other organs of state, and all other relevant stakeholders to accelerate the development of skills and competencies to support the oceans economy.

At the time, little did I know that I will be the Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation and that I will be at the centre of developing the skills required by the maritime sector. Ngempela babeqinisele abadala uma bethi “unyawo alunampumulo”.

I also wish to use this opportunity to assure the TVET college sector, its staff and students, employers and local communities that my Ministry, which now combines higher education, science and innovation, is not going to drop vocational education and training, just because it is not included in its title. I want to say I will continue to give priority to the expansion, improvement of quality, and increased programme offerings - like the one today on maritime - for the TVET sector.

Instead, bringing together higher education, training, and science and innovation must be seen as a huge opportunity for a more integrated approach to both skills development, knowledge production and innovation.

For example, as part of strengthening the TVET college sector, I am going to be ensuring that money is set aside by my departments to incentivise, recognise and support innovation in TVET colleges. There are lots of innovations taking place in the sector, but have thus far not been fully supported by government.

Now I am going to change that. I am inviting employers to partner with government in promoting and harnessing innovative ideas originating from the sector.

Programme Director

South Africa is surrounded by just under 4000 kilometres of sea line and we have correctly identified our oceans as a strategic resource which we have not fully taken advantage of given its hugely untapped potential.

According to Operation Phakisa – South Africa’s oceans economy strategy, our oceans have the potential to contribute up to R177 billion to the gross domestic product and create just over one million jobs by 2033, with between 800 000 and one million being direct jobs.

Through Operation Phakisa, 47 detailed initiatives have been identified, whose progressive implementation is expected to increase the oceans economy's GDP contribution by R20 million per annum and lead to the creation of 22 000 direct new jobs this year - 2019.

To further explore this potential, through Operation Phakisa, Government brought together teams from labour, business, academia and other sectors to work together in experimental laboratories to explore all possibilities and further unlock the potential of our country’s vast coastline.

To provide policy certainty and uniformity, government launched the Comprehensive Maritime Transport Policy or CMTP.

The CMTP is an embodiment of Government’s commitment to the growth, development and transformation of South Africa’s maritime transport sector.

It represents South Africa’s medium to long-term vision, the underpinning philosophy and principles that inform maritime development and the direction that Government together with industry will be taking for the sector to reach its full potential.

Cabinet also approved the Inland Waterways Safety Strategy which sets standards and enhances procedures for permitting and licensing arrangements for boats operating on inland waterways. This will ensure the safety of small vessels on South Africa’s inland waterways.

For South Africa to achieve its full maritime potential, Government identified two enablers, that of Skills and Capacity Building and that of Research, Technology and Innovation in preparation for the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

The Ministerial Task Team on the Fourth Industrial Revolution established by my predecessor, Minister Naledi Pandor, would provide critical policy advice on how our Post-School Education and Training system should respond to opportunities and challenges presented by the 4IR, particularly on issues relating to curriculum development, science and innovation.

Its output will also be a crucial input into the work of the Presidential Commission on the Fourth Industrial Revolution presided over by the State President. I want the TVET college sector to also play its part in advancing the 4IR, and I pledge to support the sector in this regard.

As this work is underway, the department is already developing a Skills Master Plan in response to the known skills demands associated with the 4IR.

This plan will be complemented by a national list of Occupations in High Demand and the Critical Skills List.

We will also be implementing the new Sector Education and Training Authority or SETA landscape from the 1st of April 2020 with the aim of strengthening, realigning and repurposing the SETA system.

I want the SETAs to come much closer to the TVET college sector and I am going to make this into an agreement with the SETAs by which I will judge their performance.

Artisan skills development will remain our top priority while we have to rapidly expand workplace-based learning through learnerships, work integrated learning and internships.

Through our recently launched Centres of Specialisation pilot, we have prioritised the training of 780 youth in artisan skills and will assist 26 TVET college campuses to improve their capacity to develop artisans.

This will be done together with industry partners focusing on 13 priority trades or occupations, which includes priority trades or occupations comprising skill sets for bricklaying or to become an electrician, millwright, boilermaker and automotive mechanic, among others.

We must therefore consciously include maritime skills among these priority skills required to grow our economy.

Through the National Skills Fund, we have made available R150 million to upgrade workshops at TVET colleges to meet industry requirements. I also invite the SETAs, employers and State-Owned Companies to partner with us in the upgrading of TVET college workshops.

The SETAs have also ensured that all participating employers in the Centres of Specialisation programme received a discretionary grant. These measures are all aimed at strengthening the TVET college sector into a respectable and preferred choice in the post-school education and training sector.

I therefore expect that all of us who are gathered here today to be part of these agents of change by creating a transformed and inclusive maritime sector for South Africa.

Today, Umfolozi TVET College, with its partner employers, has been positioned as a leader among peers, by embracing our philosophy of “turning every workplace into a training space”.

We therefore expect that all our TVET Colleges will play a role in providing quality education in an environment that is conducive to teaching and learning.

I congratulate the Umfolozi TVET College management, learners and all Government and non-governmental agencies involved in this initiative.

More than R100 million was approved for the refurbishment and establishment of this maritime academy.

In addition, maritime-related qualifications were developed and approved to be implemented over a period of four years.

Through a rigorous selection process, a total of 68 learners were recruited and have started training in the maritime foundation phase subjects that will eventually qualify them to enter the cadet learning programmes.

For this training project, Umfolozi TVET College responded to the National Skills Development strategy III (2011-2016) and the Human Resource Development South Africa commitment to urgently implement skills development programmes which are purposefully aimed at equipping recipients with requisite skills.

I am glad that I am here today, launching the academy, a project I initiated a few years ago.

Therefore, it remains our intention through this maritime academy to contribute to the oceans economy sectors such as marine transport, manufacturing, offshore oil, aquaculture, small harbour development, marine protection services and marine and coastal tourism.

This we will do through the initial focus in the training of cadets and renewals of the Standards for Training and Certification of Watch keepers and Seafarers certificates.

On the National Seafarer Programme, this academy will train Deck/Engineering Cadets, Deck Officers, Skippers for Port Operations and Marine Motorman Grades.

It should be noted that the role of SETAs, SAIMI, SAMSA and SAIMENA the South African Institute of Marine Engineers and Naval Architects, in maritime education is key to the re-establishment, repositioning and refinement of our maritime training and development strategy.

TETA and other involved SETAs at this Umfolozi Maritime Academy must make sure that all the learning programmes in their respective sectors are fully and inclusively coded in their Sector Skills Plan for immediate needs and for the future.

SAMSA must ensure accreditations of and compliance to internal standards of all programmes and qualifications.

We invite SAIMENA to avail the experienced and even the retired experts to support the capacity building efforts to fast-track the required skills transfer to the young and upcoming, and to assist with fulfilling the accreditation requirements of this maritime academy.

As we contend with the Scarce and Critical Skills shortage in the Ocean Economy sector, training projects and programmes initiatives that are similar to those of this Maritime Academy are critical and highly commendable.

I also call upon the Maritime Private Training Providers to also partner with the public TVET colleges, including strengthening our collaboration with relevant industries to ensure that our TVET colleges respond to the skills requirements of provinces and municipalities.

An essential part of this strategy is measures to bridge the divide between the process of training and employment, between the classroom and the workplace.

To this end, we want to strengthen our Adopt-a-TVET College Campaign to promote cooperation between industry and TVET colleges, as just outlined.

As a Department we will ensure that we encourage other public TVET colleges, particularly those in coastal provinces, to include maritime courses in their curriculum.

This will ensure that as a country we produce our own local maritime capacity rather than to import these skills.

To further facilitate access to our institutions of post-school education and training, we will continue to offer bursaries through NSFAS, to support students from families earning a gross annual income of up to R350 000 per annum at both universities and TVET colleges.

This bursary scheme is meant to cover full tuition costs, books and learner support materials, and to provide subsidies to assist with accommodation, living expenses, and transport costs in some cases.

The substantial investment in poor and working-class students over the 2019 MTEF, amounts to R82 billion for university students and R20.4 billion for TVET college students.

To all the deserving learners today, congratulations on meeting SAMSA's 60% in all the engineering and technical subject enrolment requirements.

I am convinced that all of you will achieve the entry requirements to the cadetship programme.

We honour you, we love you, and wish you all the best in future and I want to come for your graduation ceremonies soon!

As President Nelson Mandela, once said:

“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world”.

Please use these maritime academy resources and become experts while time and opportunity still allow and favour you.

Grab all the opportunities in the offering and fly your flags high, the Umfolozi TVET College flag, the NSF-DHET and indeed the South African flag sky high across the globe.

To SAIMI, I am expecting your full support of this college.

TETA, I am expecting you to ensure that these learners get access to workplaces when they have to do their practicals, and ensure that there are spaces secured for them.

To Transnet and other employers, I urge you to play a critical role in ensuring that these learners are offered workplace training.

Thank you to our funders, our National Skills Fund and Transport SETA for bringing a black child's dream to reality.

I thank you all.

ENDS