

MEDIA ADVISORY

DATE: 17 November 2023

TO: All Media

ATTENTION: News Editors/ Reporters

For Immediate use:

MINISTER NZIMANDE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE EUROPEAN UNION HYDROGEN WEEK

The Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation, Dr Blade Nzimande will be participating in the European Union Hydrogen Week to be held from the 20th to the 24th November 2023 in Brussels – Belgium.

In 2021, the European Union in partnership with other countries announced a new ambitious, long-term Just Energy Transition Partnership to support South Africa's decarbonisation efforts.

The Partnership aims to accelerate the decarbonisation of South Africa's economy, with a focus on the electricity system, to help it achieve the ambitious goals set out in its updated Nationally Determined Contribution emissions goals.

An initial commitment of \$8.5 billion for the first phase of financing, through various mechanisms including grants, concessional loans and investments and risk sharing instruments, has been mobilised. The Partnership is expected to prevent up to 1-1.5 gigatonnes of emissions over the next 20 years and support South Africa to move away from coal and to accelerate its transition to a low emission, climate resilient economy.

South Africa has been exploring the potential of hydrogen as an energy source and an alternative to traditional fossil fuels. The country has shown interest in developing a hydrogen economy to address energy challenges, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and promote sustainable economic growth.

South Africa has committed to stringent greenhouse gas emission targets, aiming to reduce levels to 398-510 million metric tons of CO₂ equivalent by 2025 and 350-420 million metric tons of CO₂ equivalent by 2030. The adoption of the hydrogen economy provides an opportunity to re-industrialise its economy including the hard-to-abate industries.

The launch of the Hydrogen Society Roadmap (HSRM) by Minister Nzimande in February 2022, serves as a national coordinating framework to facilitate the integration of hydrogen-related technologies in various sectors of the South African economy and

stimulate economic recovery, in line with the Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan.

Benefits for South Africa's Participation in the European Union Hydrogen Week

South Africa's participation in the EU Hydrogen Week align with the country's priority actions to be pursued in the short term (2021-2024) and these include:

The alignment and integration of the HSRM with relevant national priorities and plans pertaining to energy, industry, decarbonization and just transition in order to provide investor confidence and support scale-up.

Furthermore, the participation of South Africa in the EU Hydrogen Week forms part of the series of roundtables titled "Science Diplomacy for Economic Development through Hydrogen" (SDEDH). This is an initiative of DSI's International Office jointly with the Infrastructure Office from the Presidency that seeks to directly support both the HSRM and the draft Hydrogen Commercialization Strategy for South Africa (HCSSA) through a series of local and international roundtable workshops and follow up engagements. To date, roundtables have been held with Germany, The Netherlands, Denmark and Japan

Minister Nzimande will address the high-level policy conference under the theme "Hydrogen and the global challenges ahead". The session will be held as follows:

Date: Monday, 20 November 2023 in Brussels, Belgium

Venue: Hall 11, Main Auditorium

Time: 14:00-15:00

Minister Nzimande will also do a walkabout at the South Africa pavilion to meet the South African delegation that is attending and showcasing the South African work at the conference.

-end-

Issued by the Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation
Building 53, CSIR Campus
Meiring Naudé Road
Brummeria
Pretoria

Enquiries: Ishmael Mnisi at 066 037 8859