

Media Statement

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Minister of Public Works examines the construction industry's future in his keynote address at the 2010 Construction Summit

As one of the first keynote speakers at the inaugural Construction Summit, Minister of Public Works, Honourable Minister Geoff Doidge, delivered a heartfelt speech to a room full of construction industry leaders and stakeholders. The 2010 Construction Summit hosted by a partnership between the Construction Industry Development Board (cidb) and the Chattered Institute of Building Africa(CIOB) was attended by over 400 delegates and lead by renowned local and international industry from countries such as China and Singapore.

The honourable Minister began his speech by commenting on the economic recession and just how the construction industry had managed to survive and in actual fact, flourish while other sectors felt the pinch of the economic downturn. Minister Doidge attributed this boom to government and private sector spending on projects such as stadia, airports, the Gautrain and the extensive road upgrade programmes.

He then went on to say that for the industry to look forward, it was important to see where it had come from. He reminded the delegates of the White Paper that was written for the industry in 1999. The goal of this paper was to “reorientate the industry over a 10 – 20-year period”. He commented that his counterpart, Jeff Radebe, had said: “The White Paper is about change and actions are needed to stimulate the change”. These actions include increased participation of the emerging sector, improved labour relations and sustainable employment, appropriate human resource development, improved industry and client performance, and finally establishing the institutional arrangements to create an industry that will adapt to the changes brought about by globalisation.

Minister Doidge focused on the elements of the growth path and Industrial Policy Action Plan (IPAP) work.

He requested that the Summit’s participants consider what the “reorientation of the sector” would deliver over the next decade and how to become adaptable and effective in the changing environment. He then discussed the frustrations of emerging black companies, considering the growth phase this sector has had. He recognised their contribution and role in the economy and saluted their business capabilities. He also stated that they have become globally competitive and adaptable companies.

In closing, Minister Doidge commended the cidb and CIOB for their commitment to construction industry development as illustrated by hosting the Construction Summit. He also encouraged the sector to consider their participation in becoming a truly adaptable sector that supports South Africa's developmental path, ensuring global competitiveness. He called on the industry to support the scaling-up and continued growth of the skills base, as well as how the sector should balance the demands of profit and investment in research and development in developing "green construction products". But most importantly, he called for the industry to "ensure the sustainable growth and development of our large companies as well as that of our emerging black sectors".

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For any additional information on the summit, the cidb or the CIOB, please feel free to contact:

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