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SACCI Media Statement on the 2020 SONA

The South African Chamber of Commerce and Industry notes and welcomes the President's remarks in his 2020 State of the Nation address.

We look forward to working with the President and his team in many of the major initiatives announced in his speech.

SA's major challenges in the area of affordable and consistent energy availability to drive business, industry and commerce should receive the level of attention promised in the address. Similarly, the action on fixing SOEs to contribute to economic growth and the planned actions around creating a capable state are good interventions.

The release of the high demand telecoms spectrum has been in planning for far too long and waiting for ICASA to resolve this by the year end is too far. We urge the government to resource this area adequately and target an actionable date of not later than end June 2020. This is a critical enabler in the telecoms infrastructure space and we cannot wait any longer to tool up in such a critical area. If this means a 24/7 work cycle by the officials involved so be it.

The President's intentions in the areas of addressing youth skills development from early childhood development to a reduction of youth unemployment are all welcome initiatives.

We particularly congratulate the President for having made this SONA speech to be about inclusive economic growth and job creation

As the preeminent and most representative business formation in SA, we look forward to engaging the public sector on many aspects of these plans in the immediate future.

Non-Profit Company (NPC): Reg No. 1945/20230/08 VAT No. 4840111670

Directors: M Xulu (President), N Malefane (Deputy President), N Pollock (Vice President), J Heshu (Vice President), S Conradie (Treasurer), M Motsumi (Chamber Forum Chair), M Pirikisi, M Bosch, L Blackbeard, H Ndlovu, M Jacobs, A Mahomed, A Mukoki (CEO), Z Ndlovu (Past President)

Whilst the announced plans indicate a level of seriousness in addressing the short to medium term challenges, we would urge the government to articulate a very clear long-term vision and plan for the republic of South Africa.

If SA is to move from being a developing economy to a developed economy and consequently, address the triple challenges of poverty, unemployment and inequality, it would be those long-term plans that should serve as a template for future annual SONAs.

We have the challenges of dealing decisively and of creating clear, concise and comprehensible plans on how we aim to address the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. In particular; the end to poverty; zero hunger; quality education; good health and well-being; gender equality; access to clean water and sanitation; access to affordable and clean energy; decent work and economic growth; industry, innovation and infrastructure; reduced inequalities ; peace, security, institutions; and climate action.

Additionally, our plans and progress in how we intend to address the pillars of the WEF Global Competitiveness Index on which we are measured by international investors, should be articulated and clear, especially in the 4 sub categories of ; an enabling environment(this includes the areas of institutions, infrastructure, ICT adoption, macro-economic stability); human capital(this includes health and skills); markets(this includes product market, labour market, size of market, financial system) ; and the innovation eco-system (this includes business dynamism and innovation capability).

Our long-term plans and resource allocation in these areas need to be decisive, deliberate and measurable.

We wish to echo the President's call that these problems cannot be solved by government alone. All social partners and stakeholders now need to focus more on working together to find solutions to the complex problems facing South Africa and our potential and assumed leadership role in the African continent.

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