

Speaking Notes to the Director-General, Ms Thulisile Manzini

OPENING REMARKS AT THE TRADE PROMOTION ORGANIZATIONS (TPO) GLOBAL DIALOGUE – PRE-MINISTERIAL (22 July 2025)

1. Opening and Welcome

It is my great honour and privilege to welcome you all to this important occasion, the TPO Global Dialogue – Pre-Ministerial session. You are most welcome. We wish you fruitful deliberations and success in all your discussions. In the spirit of Ubuntu, we welcome you and wish you harmony and wisdom in your deliberations.

2. The Role of TPOs in MSME Development

This gathering underscore the critical role played by Trade Promotion Organizations (TPOs) in shaping a more inclusive and resilient global trade ecosystem. TPOs are not only facilitators of exports. They are enablers of opportunity, particularly for our Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). Their targeted support, through market intelligence, capacity building, and export promotion helps MSMEs navigate an often complex and competitive global marketplace. When TPOs work effectively, they forge new pathways into untapped markets, across emerging sectors, and for first-time exporters who are ready to grow beyond their borders.

3. The Power of Partnership: MSMEs and TPOs

Collaboration between MSMEs and TPOs been a cornerstone of advancing sustainable and inclusive trade. It is through this partnership that we see MSMEs not only survive but thrive, even in the face of global challenges. Together, we are strengthening ecosystems, improving export-readiness, and unlocking innovation that empowers local businesses, women entrepreneurs, and youth-led enterprises alike.

4. Looking Ahead: The Global SME Ministerial Meeting 2025

As we look forward to the Global SME Ministerial Meeting 2025, we must acknowledge its strategic importance. Tomorrow's Ministerial meeting is more than a high-level dialogue, but a platform for transformation. It underscores the centrality of SMEs in global value chains, the urgency of making trade more inclusive and equitable, and the power of policy coherence and innovation to change lives.

5. Conclusion

In closing, allow me to once again thank each of you for your presence and your commitment to this shared journey. Let us continue to collaborate, innovate, and advocate so that trade can serve not just economies, but people and communities across the globe.

I wish you all a successful and engaging dialogue ahead.
May your contributions over these days lead to practical solutions, deepen partnerships, and lasting impact.

Thank you.