

**MINISTER STELLA TEMBISA NDABENI SPEAKING NOTES AT HERITAGE DAY
CELEBRATIONS AT BOLIVIA LODGE IN POLOKWANE LIMPOPO.**

29 September 2025

- **Honourabe Premier Dr. Phophi Ramathuba**
- **Executive Mayor**
- **MEC for Economic Development**
- **DG of the Department of Small Business Development, Ms Thulisile Manzini**
- **SEDFA Chairperson Ms Nonzuzo Makanda**
- **SEFDA CEO Mr Nkosikhona Mbatha**
- **Senior officials of national departments, provincial and entities present.**
- **I also greet all entrepreneurs and creatives present.**

It is with great pleasure that I address this very important gathering of celebrating our Heritage. This gathering will not only celebrate the rich Heritage of South Africa, but we will also be engaging on topics of national importance – that of counterfeit goods, which needs bold actions from government in efforts to curb the scourge. We will further deal with concerns of the creative industry.

We are meeting in difficult times when the global economy is volatile, amidst shifts to unilateralism and protectionism. We are hosting the G20 Presidency under the theme Solidarity, Equality and Sustainability, and will not be swayed in our commitment to use the G20 Presidency to champion the developmental issues of the Global South and Africa in particular.

We are responsible as a department for the Startup 20 and will be hosting the Startup20 Summit on the 13th and 14th November in Johannesburg. In July we hosted the Startup20 Mid-Term Engagement, as well as the Global SME Ministerial Meeting which was attended by ministers and heads of delegation from more than 60 countries.

What we have learnt from these engagements is that globally MSMEs are the engines of growth, innovation and job creation.

In South Africa, our 2.7 million MSMEs contribute 66% of all jobs. To meet the country's jobs targets, we need to double the number of MSMEs.

To realize this target, DSBD is busy with a number of strategic initiatives and policy reforms. We recently amended the National Small Enterprise Act and are busy setting up the Office of the Small Enterprise Ombuds to address unfair practice including non-payment to MSMEs. We have also developed a Business Licensing Policy together with the Business Licencing Amendment Bill to streamline business licencing processes. We have developed a Township and Rural Economic Development and Revitalization Policy, which is intended to turn marginalized spatial economies into vibrant economies. We know the untapped creativity that exists in our townships and rural communities that just needs to be unlocked.

We have also just completed the National Entrepreneurship Strategy, as well as the Incubation and Business Development Services Policy to set standards for incubation and business development support.

Last year we developed the MSME and Co-operatives Funding Policy to address the R350 billion credit gap. This policy advocated for a Fund of Funds and we are working with the DTIC on the R100 billion Transformation Fund.

Through our agency SEDFA we provide blended finance, credit guarantees, wholesale lending, and direct lending to underserved MSMEs and co-operatives who would otherwise not access capital. Especially those owned by women and youth.

Over the last term of government, SEDFA disbursed R5.3 billion to 528,752 women-owned businesses across the country, through both Direct and Wholesale Lending channels. Of the total disbursements, R3.18 billion (or 60% of total disbursements) was disbursed to women-owned businesses operating the rural towns and villages, indicating our commitment to financial inclusion.

For the 7th Administration, we will provide financial and non-financial support to more than 1 million MSMEs and co-operatives as our contribution to the country's 3% plus MTDP growth target.

Over the next 5 years we will:

- Finance just under 620 000 MSMEs through SEDFA's Development Fund.
- Finance another 34 000 MSMEs through SEDFA's Commercial Fund, targeting high growth scalable MSMEs.
- Provide just under 560 000 MSMEs with pre-investment support, including entrepreneurship support, training, incubation support, formalization support, as well as assistance in the financial application process; and
- Provide just over 180 000 MSMEs with post-investment support, including coaching and mentoring, business skills training and contract management to ensure our investments are safe.

Programme Director

This gathering brings together key stakeholders in the creative industries including fashion, music and film to tackle some of the most pressing challenges facing the creative sector. Enterprises in the creative sector spanning fashion, music, film, and digital media are particularly rich in innovation and heritage but face a growing threat,

the proliferation of counterfeit goods and piracy, which erode revenue, weaken consumer trust, and compromise competitiveness.

We will hear from key players in the creative- economy eco-system how to scale up the fight against counterfeiting and piracy.

We must collectively promote public awareness and behavioral change in favour of authentic, proudly South African products.

We must empower our Township and Rural Creative Entrepreneurs with practical knowledge on combating counterfeits, strengthening intellectual property protection, and enhancing branding.

We will also use this gathering to engage women enterprises, associations and formations on the design of the Women's Entrepreneurship Fund which we will implement through SEDFA. Through co-creation of the design with women entrepreneurs, associations, and community formations, we will ensure that the Fund responds directly to their needs and realities.

Programme Director,

As I conclude, let us Commemorate Heritage Month by celebrating our creatives and the role they play in driving local economic growth and innovation, as well as in forging national cohesion and identity.

The world is becoming increasingly polarized and divisive, and we are not immune to these tendencies here at home. We will continue to look to our creative entrepreneurs to defend our heritage and forge a national identity that leaves no one behind. We must place economic emancipation at the centre of the new national identity we must collectively build.

I am confident this event will contribute innovative ideas and solutions to this end.

Thank you