



**DEPUTY MINISTER
DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

**WELCOMING REMARKS BY THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF ENERGY, MS
BARBARA THOMSON AT THE RENEWABLE ENERGY IPP ROUNDTABLE
DISCUSSION, CSIR, PRETORIA, 11 APRIL 2014**

Honourable Minister of Energy, Mr Dikobe Ben Martins
Acting Director-General, Mr Tseliso Maqubela
Representatives of Independent Power Producers
Members of the Senior Management of the Department of Energy
A very good morning to you all

Today I have the easy task of welcoming you and set the tone for what I hope will be an absorbing discussion on our Renewable Independent Power Producers Programme.

As you are aware, the Department of Energy has embarked on an aggressive campaign to increase the number of independent power producers through our renewable energy programme.

It took us a while to get going but we have now reached a point where we are internationally recognized for renewable energy investments. We are one of the 10 founding members of the Renewables Club, a political initiative of pioneering countries that are united by an important goal: a worldwide transformation of the energy system. The 10 Renewables Club members currently account for more than 40 per cent of global investments in renewable energy.

This achievement would not have been possible if it were not for the hard work put in by IPP's and the belief that our partnership would work.

Apart from the obvious benefits of clean power production and the ability to construct renewable energy projects much faster than traditional thermal power stations, we recognise the potential impact that the renewable energy industry will have on job creation, skills transfer, infrastructure development and economic development which are much needed in our country.

As I speak with you a number of projects have reached the critical commercial operation stage and a few more are on the verge of doing so, providing hope to many people in rural communities residing in small towns with little hope for prosperous livelihoods.

To date, the programme has attracted over R150 billion in foreign direct investment with about 7500 jobs having been created during the construction phase of Windows 1 and 2.

We are encouraged by the enthusiasm with which foreign companies have embraced the opening up of our renewable energy space and we thank them for the money they are investing in this. Our country is already realising the tangible outcomes of your investment in terms of job creation, improving local skills and creating income-generating activities.

Of course there will be teething problems like with any other new major development initiative. This is the reason we are here. This forum should help us identify these challenges and lay a firm basis for a collective response by government and independent power producers to such challenges.

It is our conviction that if both sides (government and IPP's) double their efforts in ensuring cooperation and resolving issues together, we will together turn a good renewable energy programme into a great programme to be used as a benchmark internationally.

I thank you