

**STATEMENT BY THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF THE DEPARTMENT OF MINERAL  
RESOURCES AND ENERGY, DR NOBUHLE NKABANE, NUCLEAR  
TECHNOLOGY IMBIZO**

Programme Director,

Director General of the Department of Women Youth and People with Disability, Adv.  
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Executive Chairperson of the South African Young Nuclear Professionals Society, Mr  
Mr Israel Sesoko

Councillor from The Embassy Of The Republic Of Korea, Mr Jeongdae Kim

Chairperson of the Board of South African Nuclear Energy Corporation, Mr Dave  
Nicholls

Chief Executive Officers and Directors of Different Institutions

Officials at the Department of Mineral Resources and Energy

Ladies and Gentlemen

A very good morning and a warm welcome to all of you to this strategic event, Nuclear  
Technology Imbizo under the theme “**Promoting Global Partnership to Support the  
South African New Nuclear Build Program**”.

I have been made aware that Nuclear Technology Imbizo is organised by the South  
African Young Nuclear Professionals Society (SAYNPS), in collaboration with Nuclear  
Industry Association of South Africa (NIASA), Women in Nuclear South Africa  
(WINSA) and Southern African Radiation Protection Society (SARPA).

Thank you for inviting me here to deliver a keynote address. Nuclear is an important  
issue, and a highly topical one in South Africa – for the government, parliament and  
the public alike. Especially at this point where, as the Department, we plan to advance  
towards procuring the 2500MW nuclear programme by 2024. This programme was

identified as one of those supporting the Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan whilst ensuring security of energy supply.

In 2021 Minister Gwede Mantashe made a determination in terms of section 34 of the Electricity Regulation Act, 2006 (Act No. 4 of 2006) for the 2 500 MW of nuclear Energy to be procured. Pursuant to this, the National Energy Regulator of South Africa's concurred with the Minister's determination in August 2021, the concurrence came with "Suspensive Conditions" that are currently being addressed.

Programme Director

It is important for me to reiterate the Principle Number 3 of South Africa's Nuclear Energy Policy, which states that "*Nuclear Energy shall form part of South Africa's strategy to mitigate climate change.*" Therefore, in line with this policy principle as we embark on the consultations for the Just Energy Transition in South Africa, we recognize that nuclear plays a pivotal role as one of the clean energy sources that are needed to achieve Net-Zero Emissions by 2050.

It also important to note that the Integrated Resource Plan of 2019 indicates that the expected decommissioning of approximately 24 100MW of coal fired power plants post-2030 supports the need for additional capacity from cleaner baseload energy technologies including giving recognition to nuclear as a clean energy source.

Programme Director

The silence about the role of nuclear energy in the National Climate Change debate is of concern. Our policy embraces an energy mix which includes, Nuclear, Coal, Hydro, Gas, Battery Storage and Renewable energy. We follow global developments which points out the key role of nuclear energy towards global decarbonisation and there are demonstrated cases where some countries of the world are already in compliance with the Paris Agreement on Climate Change because of increasing the capacity of nuclear in their energy mix.

Our country needs all energy sources, working side-by-side to achieve the energy security whilst we gradually transition to respond to climate change imperatives. To this end we need to extract maximum benefit from the full value chain of implementing energy projects within our country. The beneficiation of our own minerals should be exploited in full to ensure that benefits accrue for our people.

It has been proven internationally that nuclear energy provides an electricity source that our country should extensively invest in, to produce large amounts of clean electricity and to address the scourge of energy poverty whilst delivering on various socio-economic benefits such as long-term employment and positive economic impact.

The Koeberg Nuclear Power Plant provides about 5 percent of clean reliable electricity into national grid. The Eskom team and other key stakeholders is working to extend the lifespan of the Koeberg Nuclear Power Plant by 20 years subject to regulatory approval. We are grateful for the International Energy Agency's continued support to Eskom through the peer review missions on the Safety Aspects of Long-Term Operation at our Koeberg power station

Ladies and Gentlemen

We are embarking on the Multipurpose Research Reactor Project for the replacement of the SAFARI-1 Research Reactor to ensure South Africa remains amongst the top four global radioisotopes producers while ensuring the continuation of research and development on nuclear technology. This places Necsa on a path to provide much needed radioisotopes for medical and industrial applications, execution of research through beam lines, and jobs which are essential for our economy.

Ladies and gentlemen

The roles of nuclear power and renewables have been acknowledged in the fight against climate change especially during the 21st United Nations Conference of the Parties on Climate Change held in Paris in December 2015.

According to the International Atomic Energy Agency, several countries are planning to include nuclear power for climate change mitigation in their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) under the Paris Agreement. This is because the international community acknowledged that plans in NDCs are not sufficient to meet the goal of limiting the increase in average global temperature to below 2 °C pre-industrial levels.

South Africa is well endowed with nuclear capability and should align with the global consensus to recognise that nuclear power will play a critical role in mitigating climate change. Therefore, South Africa should include nuclear power and infrastructure as part of the Green Taxonomy to ensure nuclear is competitive and sustainable.

Ladies and gentlemen

As we engage during these two days with our assessment on the *Promoting Global Partnership to Support the South African New Nuclear Build Program*”, we must return to the central question of how we can demystify nuclear technology for a broader reach to ensure public’ understanding and acceptance.

We acknowledge initiatives such as Stand Up For Nuclear that play an important role to help demystify nuclear technology for a broader reach to ensure public’ understanding and acceptance.

In closing, I would like to thank all stakeholders in the nuclear industry, for their continued support of activities such as Nuclear Technology Imbizo. We certainly hope that this will not be the last time to South Africa host such event.

Thank you!