

Dlamini-Zuma calls for a skills revolution in Africa's mining sector

Cape Town, 3 February 2014 - The Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Madame Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma has called on governments and the mining sector to work together in identifying the skills required by the industry and provide the requisite education, research, training, and technology development.

Speaking at the opening of the Ministerial Symposium held at the ongoing Mining Indaba, Madame Dlamini-Zuma said, "For Africa to industrialize, eradicate poverty and to provide hope for its young generations, it needs a skills revolution."

"The end result of this transformation process should be an integrated, prosperous and people-centered Africa, at peace with itself and taking its rightful place in the world," she said.

She stressed that the mining sector must transform from its enclaves where only a few prosper while others remain in poverty. The sector, she stressed, "must catalyze and contribute to Africa's broad-based growth and development and that is fully integrated into a single African market."

"We have to work sector by sector, and region by region on the building of down-stream linkages into mineral beneficiation and manufacturing and up-stream linkages into mining capital goods, consumables and service industries," she said.

The AUC Chairperson informed the meeting that a report on illicit financial outflows will be released by a High Level Panel led by former Southern African President Thabo Mbeki at the March 2014 Joint ECA, AUC Conference of Ministers of Finance and Planning. "Contrary to popular perception, most illicit flows are from the companies using techniques such as transfer pricing and other methods and not from corrupt politicians, she said.

Madame Dlamini Zuma invited the mining sector to participate in the African Union Agenda 2063 debates and pointed out that in the future, Africa should be discussing different problems from those that exist today.

"We hope that the mining sector will work with us in ensuring that the recommendations to stop these practices from the High-level panel are implemented, and that African capital is directed towards African development," she said. She stressed that the work of the AMV partners should also ensure transparency in contracts, build capacity for contract negotiations and build accountable governance. This would ensure that the African citizenry can see the results and impact of the rents and taxes from our mineral resources, is as critical as effective collection of rents and taxes from these resources."

Other speakers included Jonathan Moor, Senior Vice President and Managing Director, Mining Indaba LLC, Veston Malango, CEO, Chamber of Mines, Namibia and South Africa's Department of Mineral Resources Minister, Susan Shabangu. Presentations were made by the World Bank's Paulo de Sa, Rama Ayman from KPMG and Roger Baxter, from the Chamber of Mines of South Africa.

Ministers from approximately 34 countries, representatives from the Chambers of Mines, Mining Companies, African Union Commission, Financiers and Investors and African Minerals Development Centre implementation partners attended the symposium.