



**MMS Mdladlana**  
*MP*

As we celebrate the tenth year of the enactment of the SAQA Act, I am confident that the foundation for building a learning nation has been laid and that the NQF has made and will continue to make a significant contribution to the development of an education and training system that meets the needs of our nation.

Government has set itself the target of halving unemployment and attendant poverty by the year 2014 and the availability of a skilled workforce is critical for the achievement of this economic and social development target. The Department of Labour (DoL) has identified the provision of learnerships as a key vehicle for enabling skills development and I am encouraged to note that there are currently 520 qualifications associated with learnerships registered on the NQF. SAQA has a critical role to play in South Africa's social and economic advancement by ensuring that our education and training standards are nationally accepted and internationally comparable and SAQA's leadership in the promotion of qualifications linked to learnerships is appreciated.

In the year under review, SAQA launched its report *Trends in Public Higher Education in South Africa 1992 to 2001*. This publication, with data drawn from the National Learners' Records Database (NLRD), is the first in a planned series of regular reports and gives a comprehensive picture of the type and distribution of higher education qualifications held by South Africans and available to the labour market. The NLRD is now a key resource for government and corporate organisations, populated with data that can inform strategic planning in human resource development.

The review of the NQF has raised questions, primarily of a technical nature, regarding the type of framework that best suits the needs of the country. The debate has not yet been fully resolved and I am aware that this delay has been frustrating for the NQF community and indeed for SAQA. I have been encouraged by the commitment of the education and training community to the principles of the NQF during this period and I commend SAQA for maintaining the system in difficult times and for engaging constructively in the ongoing debates. I am confident that decisions on the future shape of the NQF will be forthcoming in the foreseeable future.

I wish to thank the Executive Officer of SAQA and his staff for their contribution in ensuring that the statutory mandate of SAQA is being fulfilled. I also welcome on board the new Chairperson, Professor Shirley Walters and the new Authority members.

**MMS Mdladlana, MP**  
*Minister of Labour*



*H Letoka, Minister Mdladlana  
and T Mrobonwane at  
the NSDS Conference*



**GNM Pandor**  
*MP*

The fundamental responsibility of the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) is to oversee the implementation of a National Qualifications Framework (NQF) that will continue to contribute to the economic and social development of South African society. The achievements reflected in this annual report indicate that SAQA has continued to address this challenge.

A significant milestone in this period was the publication of the NQF Impact Study Report Cycle 1. It was the first stage in what will be an on-going impact study cycle. The research undertaken established 17 indicators against which to measure the impact of the NQF on the transformation of education and training. I commend SAQA for this research initiative that will provide the basis for objective, well-planned and comprehensive research monitoring and evaluation of the NQF.

In the National Learners' Records Database (NLRD), SAQA has provided an important consolidated source of national data on both qualifications registered on the NQF and the educational achievements of learners in South Africa. A heartening statistic revealed in the published report, *Trends in Public Higher Education in South Africa 1992 to 2001*, is the increase in the number of black people and in particular, black women, who have attained tertiary qualifications.

This is evidence that South Africa is becoming a learning nation and bodes well for the future economic and social transformation of our country. The development of the NLRD reflects government's commitment to "establish a register of all graduates" and with records of almost 5.5 million learners now captured I would encourage all government departments, human resource specialists and researchers to utilise this valuable national resource fully.

The success of our Human Resource Development Strategy is dependent on instilling a culture of learning that is underpinned by access to both formal and informal quality education and training. I am convinced that the NQF, with SAQA as its custodian, and in partnership with the other role players in the process, will continue to enhance the quality of qualifications offered in South Africa.

I would like to thank the former Chairperson of SAQA, Dr Mokubung Nkomo, and members of the second Authority, for their hard work and commitment during their term of office. I also wish to thank the Executive Officer and staff of SAQA for carrying out their responsibilities with dedication and professionalism.

To Professor Shirley Walters and the new members of the Authority, I welcome you to SAQA. I wish you well as you shoulder the responsibilities and challenges that lie ahead of you. Under your leadership and in partnership with key role players, I look forward to the emergence of an enhanced NQF to take us through the next 10 years of our democracy.



*Y Shapiro and Minister Pandor  
at the NLRD Report Launch*

*G.N.M. Pandor*

**GNM Pandor, MP**  
*Minister of Education*