

SPEECH DELIVERED BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF THE W&RSETA, MR TOM MKHWANAZI ON THE OCCASION OF THE 2018/19 INTERNATIONAL LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (ILDP) GRADUATION AT REGENESYS BUSINESS SCHOOL

19 July 2022, Sandton

Programme Director and Founding Director of Regenesys Business School, Mr William Vivian
Please allow me to appreciate and acknowledge the presence of the following esteemed colleagues and guests:

- The Dean of Regenesys Business School Africa, Mr Sibongiseni Kumalo
- The Registrar, Ms Towera Gondwe
- Principal of School of Public Management, Professor Marvin Kambuwa
- Representatives from our sister organisation, the EWSETA
- The guests of honour, our graduates
- Families, friends, and distinguished guests

Ladies and gentlemen, greetings from the W&RSETA

On behalf of my Board and the Management of the Wholesale and Retail SETA, I convey our hearty congratulations to the group that is graduating from the second phased of our prestigious 2018/19 International Leadership Development Programme. We commend you for your commitment in your personal development while contributing to professionalising the Wholesale and Retail Sector. You could have stopped at the Advanced Diploma that you were initially enrolled for and successfully completed; and settled back into your careers, but you decided to sacrifice the comfort of short-lived success to pursue the next level of accomplishment.

Your graduation brings to a significant and gainful conclusion of the 2018/19 programme which was the introduction of a full qualification for the ILDP. The ILDP class of 2019 has now completed the ILDP with the Postgraduate Diploma in Business Management on NQF level 8.

Reflecting on the reality of today.

As the world continues to evolve through disruptors of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, COVID-19 and unrelenting economic pressures, there has never been a greater call for leadership than now. From a W&RSETA perspective, we are pleased that we have been preparing leaders for such a time as this, through our management and executive development programmes. It is during these times that we realise the return on the massive investment we have been making to develop leaders for the future.

That future we have been planning for is now!

The skills we have been investing in through this and other programmes are needed to help the country as we recover from the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic which has further plunged our economy into a downturn. We are looking to you to provide strategic leadership and solutions that you have gained through the programme to help rebuild South Africa.

It is time for you to take your positions and lead us!

For the benefit of all who may not be familiar with this programme, the W&RSETA's prestigious International Leadership Development Programme was launched in 2009 and has become the most sought-after customised executive development in the Wholesale and Retail Sector.

The ILDP was designed to accelerate the development of high potential senior managers to prepare them to ascend the higher echelons of leadership in their companies, with an unapologetic objective to address transformation in the sector. The programme is implemented in partnership with leading business schools in South Africa to equip senior managers with relevant leadership skills and expose them to cutting-edge international best practices in wholesale and retail from developed and developing economies across the world.

We started the programme with only 16 delegates and today, about 60 delegates are accepted on to the programme with each intake.

Thirteen years later, we reflect on the programme and are proud of the gains we have made. The ILDP boasts a 348-member alumni of influential leaders who are making great strides in positioning retail as a career of choice. Of significant importance, the ILDP prepares leaders for the evolving business environment and changing economic landscape.

Through the ILDP, several talented leaders from historically disadvantaged groups have been afforded a seat at decision-making tables of some of our large companies, influencing the trajectory of retail in South Africa. We are also proud of those who have went out to start their own ventures, through which they have created job opportunities.

This milestone would not have been possible and I would like to acknowledge the partnership with Regenesys Business School for getting us to this point today. Regenesys was the first institution to offer our ILDP as a full qualification. This transition to a full qualification programme was welcomed with an expected and understandable level of trepidation from our stakeholders as we were venturing into an unfamiliar territory. We made some tough decisions and have walked a challenging journey with our stakeholders and today we appreciate the benefit of the process. I hope the company representatives share this sentiment.

Delegates can now complete the ILDP with a full qualification which opens doors for lifelong learning. The W&RSETA will continue to support your endeavours through our bursary funding which provides financial assistance up to PhD level.

I am pleased to say that we have not looked back!

We currently have 90 delegates on the programme with Regenesys' counterparts, the Gordon Institute for Business Science for the 2021/22 ILDP. Later in the year, we will invite nominations for the 2022/23 programme for 60 delegates. This is the future of the ILDP and we are glad that our stakeholders have come with us on this journey of professionalising the Wholesale and Retail Sector.

Ladies and gentlemen, please allow me to congratulate the graduants from our sister organisation, EWSETA. It is a unique opportunity to celebrate the collective gains of skills development as SETAs for the benefit of our country and we appreciate this opportunity.

As a concluding commitment, the W&RSETA will continue to invest in leadership development because the world of tomorrow, which is upon us, needs people who are prepared to navigate the new challenges and opportunities facing us. Developing our people further invests in the growth of the Wholesale and Retail Sector and position the South African retail landscape among the best in the world.

Thank you and congratulations once again!

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