

## **All systems go as curtain rises for SA's own Davos summit**

The country's own Davos Business Summit version hosted by the Black Business Council (BBC) takes place tomorrow and ends on Tuesday, with at least 18 embassies from various parts of the world expected to attend.

The various countries' embassies to be represented in what the BBC CEO Kganki Matabane dubs as South Africa's Davos Summit, will include the Russian Federation, Singapore, Turkiye, Ireland, Zimbabwe, Tunisia, Pakistan, Madagascar, Argentina, Mozambique, Canada, Dominican Republic, Jamaica, Kenya, Kingdom of Jordan and Royal Thai, among others.

"The idea of all of this is to expose our businesses and our country to the world stage. We do not work in silos. The world has globalised, and so we need to be part of that globalisation element," said Matabane.

The country's MPs will also be represented, and these, among others, include ANC's Parks Tau, president of United Democratic Movement, Bantu Holomisa, president of IFP, Velenkosini Hlabisa, EFF's Mbuyiseni Ndlozi and Rise Mzansi leader Songezo Zibi.

The annual Black Business Summit Gala Dinner, to take place at the Radisson OR Tambo Hotel and Convention Centre, Kempton Park, east of Johannesburg, will have its main event addressed by President Cyril Ramaphosa on Tuesday.

Ramaphosa is expected to locate his speech on the need for South Africa to grow its economy as an effort to create employment, and therefore end unemployment and poverty," said Matabane.

"The president will give direction, and encourage business, together with civil society, to work together for the economic good of the country," said Matabane.

Also, completing the government representation will be Trade, Industry and Competition Minister Ebrahim Patel, who will present an address focused on The African Continental Free Trade Area and Opportunities for Economic Growth, Localisation, and Industrialisation.

Matabane said the BBC was committed to exposing South Africa to the world of business in which it interacts with international business because "the time of silos is gone" and "since the world has globalised, we must be part of that globalising world".

"The BBC continues to create a platform where members, as well as senior leaders in business, government, politics, and civil society, engage on potential solutions for the prosperity of our beloved South Africa in order to create jobs and contribute positively to economic growth.

"The annual summit serves as an extension of the advocacy and policy work on socio-economic transformation matters."

Properly named "30 years of democracy- progress so far and Plans to Accelerate Implementation of reforms – its main aim is to create multiple platforms to engage "robustly" on business and socio-economic issues that will enhance, and not retard progress as we embark on a journey to creating wealth for all South Africans".

Matabane said his organisation was pleased to bring all sectors of society, including the government, under one roof to map out the future and strategies the country must pursue to create wealth.

He said the BBC is an over-arching confederation that represents black professionals, business associations and business chambers and must be alive to the needs not only of business but of society as a whole. “This is precisely the reason we are holding the summit, and having various sectors represented as a heartbeat of business in the country.

“The primary purpose of BBC is to lobby the government on policy-related matters and to play an advocacy role where policies are in place to accelerate the participation of black business in the mainstream economy,” Matabane said.

He said his organisation was pleased that through various embassies represented in the country, his organisation would have the ability to gauge what the heartbeat of business throughout the world looks like.

This, he said, would serve as a barometer to use to have an appreciation of what other businesses in the world were doing.

“We operate in the world, and we must embrace the world so that we are able to improve our business offering,” he said.

Some of the highlights of the summit will include discussion topics such as “Energy Security and the Just Transition” to be led by the director-general of the Department of Mineral Resources and Energy, Jacob Mbele.

Minister of International Relations and Cooperation Naledi Pandor, Health Minister Joe Phaahla and the Minister in the Presidency Khumbudzo Ntshavheni will also address the summit.

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