



**CHAIRMAN OF THE ENERGY COUNCIL OF SOUTH AFRICA,
FLEETWOOD GROBLER**

LAUNCH ADDRESS

02 NOVEMBER 2021

Honourable Minister of Mineral Resources and Energy, Mr Gwede Mantashe;
Honourable Deputy Minister of Mineral Resources and Energy, Dr Nobuhle Nkabane;

Director General, Advocate Thabo Mokoena;

Fellow CEOs and founding members of the Energy Council:

- Ms Natascha Viljoen, CEO of Anglo American Platinum
- Dr Ishmael Poolo, CEO of the Central Energy Fund
- Mr André de Ruyter, CEO of Eskom, who unfortunately could not join us this afternoon
- Mr Mxolisi Mgojo, CEO of Exxaro
- Mr TP Nchocho, CEO of the IDC
- Mr Andre Kirby, President of NAAMSA and
- Ms Mariam Kane-Garcia, CEO of TotalEnergies South Africa

I further wish to extend a warm welcome to the CEOs of organised business, including the Black Business Council (BBC), Business Unity South Africa (BUSA), the Minerals Council, the National Business Initiative (NBI) and the South African Petroleum Industry Association (SAPIA);

Members of the media; and

Ladies and gentlemen.

Good afternoon

The past two years have been extraordinary. Societies and economies around the world have been upended by the COVID-19 pandemic and the ensuing social and economic volatility. Further, we have reached an important point in South Africa where we need to redouble our efforts to work together to resuscitate the economy while also addressing issues related to energy security, climate change, industrialisation, localisation and unemployment. These developments will require energy systems to be adapted and, in many ways, completely reconfigured, while taking advantage of new opportunities being created.

Energy is the bedrock of a thriving society and a healthy economy. Given the profile of our energy sector and South Africa's industrial base, we have hundreds of thousands of jobs dependent on the current ecosystem and value chains. It is important that our transition is designed and undertaken in a responsible manner, despite the complexity of our macro context.

The South African energy landscape is vast and complex. It comprises large



energy producers, suppliers, and increasingly smaller, emerging players that supply this economy with energy. It is characterised by significant interdependencies between all sectors, especially our minerals and industrial complex, which forms the base of energy demand.

As countries around the world accelerate the pace at which they transform their economies, so too must South Africa take steps to ensure a sustainable energy sector that enables inclusive economic growth. Many companies present today have already taken significant steps along this journey.

The genesis of the Energy Council was a discussion we had with Minister Mantashe who spoke of the need for an integrated voice for the energy sector. Through various dialogues as a business sector, including engagements with the founding member CEOs, we collectively agreed on the need for the establishment of the Energy Council.

We also engaged with various existing business formations, several of which are represented here today. In these discussions there was overwhelming consensus regarding the need for a collective and unified approach to develop a sustainable energy sector. In these conversations it became clear that there is critical mass and collective will to ensure that the energy sector enables a growing South African economy.

It is for this reason that on behalf of the founding members I am pleased to announce the launch of the Energy Council of South Africa.

The Energy Council of South Africa is a multi-sector, CEO-led initiative. It brings together public and private sector businesses and industry associations, as well as local development finance institutions with a significant presence that actively participate in the South African energy sector.

Our purpose is to enable a thriving and sustainable energy sector. The mission of the Energy Council is to play a leadership role in South Africa's energy sector, driving stakeholder and policy alignment and assisting in addressing major issues in the energy landscape for inclusive economic growth.

The Energy Council will advance the values of one unified sector, accountability and transparency.

We intend to focus on four strategic areas. These are: a common vision for the sector; collaboratively developing a national energy strategy; contributing to the

development of enabling policies and a supportive environment for the sector; and finally, attracting and ensuring sustainable investment that supports industrialisation, localisation and job creation.

These focus areas will be realised through four key enablers: the first is being market and customer oriented; that our analysis is unbiased and fact-based, that the Council will be CEO-led; and lastly we will appropriately resource the Council to realise its objectives.

Further, I am pleased that the Energy Council of South Africa has the support of Minister Mantashe and the Department of Mineral Resources and Energy. The Minister is key to driving government's agenda in pursuing economic growth through the energy and minerals sectors. The Minister, Deputy Minister and the DMRE will be key stakeholders with whom the Energy Council will be collaborating.

The Council's formation and its ensuing work is premised on collaboration and co-creation. The founding members of the Council reflect the diversity of the energy sector, but we are driven by our purpose to be the unified voice of energy in South Africa.

The Energy Council will also work closely with organised business, such as Business Unity South Africa (BUSA), the National Business Initiative (NBI), the Minerals Council, the Black Business Council (BBC) and the South African Petroleum Industry Association (SAPIA), as well as other formations across the energy value chain.

These business formations play a significant role and have done sterling work across various sector and industry pathways, which are interconnected and their work provides a solid base on which the Energy Council can contribute and expand on.

Energy is currently one of the top agenda items for government and industry. The discussions and debates currently in the public domain are clearly robust. They reflect the complexities of the need to ensure energy security, while transitioning our economy towards a low-carbon future.

We are acutely aware of our socio-economic context and circumstances. It is critical that as we progress with our plans for a just transition, that our society



and communities are integral to the transition.

Bringing together a diversity of voices within the energy sector will enable us to tap into the collective wisdom and expertise of our founding and future members to shape a sustainable energy sector.

We believe the Council will add significant value to the energy landscape, as well as to all industry stakeholders.

There is a significant yet exciting journey ahead of us in terms of short to medium term programmes and we will soon consider wider membership. We will also be seeking to capacitate the Council with key staff, including a CEO.

Today is a historic day for the energy sector in South Africa. For the first time, we will have one forum that brings together the entire sector. It is also timely as COP26 gets underway this week and is probably one of the most important conferences yet, where climate change is front and centre of the agenda.

In closing, I would like to extend my sincere thanks to Minister Mantashe, the DG and his team and the CEOs of the founding member organisations of the Energy Council and their teams. In recognising the positive collaboration we have experienced thus far in the creation of the Energy Council, I am confident that it provides a strong base to ensure that it achieve its objectives.

We have much work that lies ahead of us, but it presents an opportunity for us to contribute to redefining South Africa's economic trajectory through a thriving and sustainable energy sector.

Thank you.