

Master Builders SA Congress
Speaking Notes for Keynote Address

Good Afternoon Honoured Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen

Yesterday, as I was organising my thoughts, I thought of the first time I met Eunice. She was sitting next to me at an event and shared her candid views on politicians with me. After, my speech I returned to a mortified, Eunice. Let me say, I hope that I don't live up to her past experiences.....And what a great way to start a relationship, I could only do better...

To this end, I was amazed that, Master Builders, an organisation that is 105 years old, remains relevant so many years after its inception in 1904. It is of course organisations that can reinvent it and provide value to its constituency that contribute to its longevity.

It struck me that since the earliest days of civilisation building have been a core skill underpinning the growth and development of societies and nations. The Egyptians, Romans, Greeks, early renaissance Europeans and other great nations produced structures that still have the power to impress us, even today with all our modern technology. I think those Master Builders of old, valued the knowledge and skill they developed over time, and honed it to a fine art in becoming Master Builders.

Today we, live in a changing world in many respects, but the development of expertise, the training of new artisans, the realisation of the future Master Builders remain a timeless value that is much needed in our more complex societies. We remain a core foundation upon which the rest of our society develops its

plans. It is an industry that contributes to job creation and significant employment of the semi skilled and unskilled worker. It also remains an industry that requires more professional skills to become available. This presents an opportunity for us to grow those with potential up this educational ladder and by so doing up the economic ladder. During these slower times, it is the measured investment in the future that we make, that will support us during the next cycle of growth.

The Construction sector is playing a significant role in the economy at the moment. The large companies in this sector's financial result are reflective of its contribution. Both the private sector and governments commitment to capital investment continues the support of this sector. The challenges many of our SMME companies are experiencing in this economic times are regrettable. We hope that your entrepreneurial spirit and knowledge will enable you and our large players to find ways of ensuring that the sector emerges stronger in the future. The sectors strength is reflected in the strength of its companies.

More and more women are entering this sector, traditionally associated with men. I trust that as we embrace this change, in our industry, we will embrace the natural strengths women bring and allow our sector to benefit and evolve taking the best of both worlds. This change might require a level of adjustment to our methods and manner of doing things but the benefits is far more likely to outweigh the costs.

Lastly, I want to pay tribute to voluntary organizations or associations and specifically your Association. The role voluntary organizations play in developing social capital, its network of members, its engagement with other organizations and institutions

its norms of reciprocity, and attitudes of trust is important for the health of our industry and our society. This conference provides the opportunity for discussions and actions that may result in growing our capacity and capability, as well as engendering safety, quality and innovation. I wish your organizations and its members another 105 years of value contribution.....