

**SA-UK Business Forum  
Chelsea Football Club, London  
Wednesday 3 March 2010**

**Remarks by Mr Mthunzi Mdwaba  
Vice President of Business Unity South Africa**

- Thank you Mr Gallagher.
- Honourable Ministers – Dr Davies, Ms Shabangu and Ms Peters. Mr Armour, Director of UK Trade and Investment. Directors General and other government officials. Distinguished business leaders from the UK and South Africa. Ladies and gentlemen.
- It is my pleasure to be here today to say a few words on behalf of the South African business delegation.
- This is a truly historical occasion. As you have heard from all the speakers this morning, the UK is one of the most important economic partners of South Africa. A standing which is reflected both in the trade and investment statistics as well as in this event.
- This is the largest ever South African business delegation to travel on such a mission, with over 200 business people participating. There is no more concrete demonstration of the strong support for the ongoing partnership between our two countries than such a strong showing from the private sector.
- We are here today with representatives from a broad cross-section of South African business. There are companies in infrastructure, health care, pharmaceuticals, media and culture, transport, mining, oil and gas, housing, construction, banking, ICT, financial services and education. Some of South Africa's largest companies are represented here. There are also many emerging players who are keen to diversify their investment portfolios and who are here to

listen with interest to the ideas for cooperation with British colleagues.

- The State Visit by President Zuma has presented us with a unique opportunity as business to be part of what is in some ways a reawakening of our relationship. Traditionally there have always been strong ties between South Africa and the UK. A visit at this particular time however provides us the chance to explore how we can move forward in the future and build on our mutual strengths.
- The world is slowly starting to come out of a global recession unlike any other we have seen. There have been many lessons learnt and new models for doing business are starting to be implemented by innovative companies in all sectors. Now is the time for us to unite as a global business community and to ensure we cooperate in moving forward.
- Ladies and gentlemen, it is now up to us as the private sector to take advantage of the momentum created by our political leaders.
- In the next three days we need to jointly identify those strategic level issues that need to be addressed in order to create a more conducive climate for doing business. We are hoping that the Co-Chairs of the sector break-away sessions this afternoon will guide your discussions in such a way that we are able to prepare a concrete report back to President Zuma for Friday.
- Tomorrow there will be the chance for one on one meetings at South African House to build on initial contacts made here today. Some of you will be able to see in person examples of the innovations being made by the UK in financial services, energy and construction.

- In a first for such a South African business delegation, we have also put together a networking event for the women who are here with us and their UK counterparts. I am told that this will be a special occasion in more ways than one.
- Ladies and gentlemen. It is now only 99 days until the FIFA 2010 World Cup kicks off in South Africa. I am told that the British are credited with inventing the beautiful game and we are looking forward to hosting the English team and their supporters. We in South Africa are doing all we can to ensure that the tournament is a resounding success and that there is a wonderful platform for the worlds favourite sport. You will shortly hear more details about the event in the presentation from Mr Danny Jordaan.
- We will come away from the hosting of 2010 with considerable experience and knowledge within the South African business community. This could be usefully shared with those in the UK who will be involved with the hosting of the 2012 Olympics.
- South Africa is the first African country to host the Soccer World Cup and it is at the heart of our planning that we hope to spread the benefits to our neighbours. The private sector can only truly prosper in stable and peaceful conditions. It is in promoting greater regional integration and economic development of our continent that we can also work closely with our British partners.
- I encourage you not to view South Africa as an isolated market but as a gateway to a region rich in possibilities.
- Thank you again for the chance to speak this morning. I wish my South African colleagues a successful visit and look forward to interacting with as many British partners as possible. Good luck.