**African Christian Democratic Party**

**11 July 2019

ACDP Parliament
Budget Vote 34 and 25: Trade and Industry & Economic Development
Speech by Wayne Thring MP**

***“Beneficiation should not remain a tag, a policy, a dream, but it must become a reality”* – says ACDP MP**

“Chairperson,

The African Christian Democratic Party welcomes the merger of the Departments of Trade and Industry, and Economic Development, as this has the potential to enhance capabilities, leading to a more efficient use of available financial resources. We note the allocated 2019/20 budget of DTI at R10.06 billion and that of EDD at R1.05 billion.

The ACDP concurs that the strengthening of intra-African trade and the promotion of economic integration, must form a key part of the strategic objectives of the Departments. Africa is set to become the next economic growth point after China, and the protagonist role of DTI in unlocking the potential of industry and business in South Africa, is huge.

The ACDP welcomes the comments made in the report of the AGSA for the departments 2017/18 financial year, when he said, “there is a growing trend of clean audits within the department.” However, Chairperson, in our pre-budget committee meetings, the ACDP raised the concern that the audit outcomes excluded the entities of the South African Bureau of Standards (SABS) and the National Regulator for Compulsory Standards (NRCS). Had these entities been included, it would have led to a different audit outcome. We will continue to monitor and hold these entities to account.

The ACDP also raised its concern over the failure to fully implement our beneficiation policies. This against the backdrop that South Africa’s total mineral reserves remain some of the world’s most valuable, with an estimated worth of some R36 trillion in platinum, gold, iron ore and coal. As a country, we are estimated to have the world’s fifth largest mining sector in terms of GDP value. We cannot continue to be exporters of our precious raw materials, and importers of finished products, there-by creating jobs beyond the borders of South Africa. We must move away from being a consumerist society, to becoming producers and exporters of quality, finished products. Beneficiation should not remain a tag, a policy, a dream, but it must become a reality.

Failure to do so will relegate our almost 10 million unemployed to the pits of despair and despondency. Failure to implement beneficiation optimally, contributes to increased levels of poverty, inequality and unemployment, leading to a stagnant economy, with little or no local and foreign direct investment. A failure to deal with corruption and fraud, wherever it is found, is a crime in itself, because corruption hurts the poor, steals from the poor, destroys the poor, and will ultimately kill the poor, if allowed to continue unimpeded. Those who are corrupt are enemies of the poor. If DTI wishes to realize its Sustainable Development Goal of building resilient infrastructure, promoting inclusive and sustainable industrialization and fostering innovation, then it must be known as an implementer and not just a dreamer.”

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