



agriculture,
forestry & fisheries

Department:
Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**Minister Zokwana Speaking Notes on the Occasion of the Road show Stakeholder
Engagement towards the 8th Meeting of BRICS Ministers of Agriculture and Agrarian
Development - At Elsenberg Agricultural College.**

19 June 2018

MEC Winde

Diplomatic Corps

Principal of the College

Academic and non-Academic Staff of the College

SRC Leadership

Officials of both National and Provincial Government

Students

It is with excitement that I have such an opportunity to visit this College to interact with the students and College community on matters that are important to all of us as critical players, in various degrees, within agricultural sector.

As you might be aware, this week South Africa is hosting the 8th Meeting of BRICS Ministers of Agriculture and Agrarian Development in Skukuza, Mpumalanga province. This meeting which will be preceded by the seminar, will be held from the 19th -22nd of June 2018. The theme for this meeting is “ *Reducing the negative impact of climate change on food security and adaptation of agriculture to climate change*”

The World is confronted with the challenge of global warming which is a result of the furious chase for profit by big manufacturing companies especially in the highly industrialized nations, through overproduction using machines that produces greenhouse gas emissions that pollute the ozone. It is these gases that influence the climate change which in turn affect agricultural production. Whilst many countries are signatories to the Kyoto protocol on reducing carbon emissions but the biggest culprits, the big industrial countries are refusing to commit. The impact of climate change is disastrous to humanity. It affect food production and therefore perpetuate hunger and poverty, whilst destroying jobs within the sector.

It is very true that in some parts of the World certain commodities that use to be produced are no more being produced because of the changed climatic conditions which means that those regions have to import what they use to produce for themselves. We are at the cusp of reaching that level as changes in climate, the gases that poison the environment and soil continues to affect us massively.

As BRICS members we will be discussing solutions and interventions to this reality. Already, there are responses in other parts of the world for which South Africa is embracing these. Technology within the context of climate smart actions and approaches are evolving so as to mitigate the impact of climate change. We want to enhance resilience in agricultural and food production systems as a whole and adaptation to new ways. This is very important for these BRICS nations if we are to survive in this challenging phenomena.

I am pleased that here there are young people which I am very passionate about them with regard to their role in agriculture. It is important that young people get to know these developments and play a role as new entrants in the sector to take these struggles forward. When we speak of climate smart methods and smart agriculture, we are essentially referring to the take-over by technology, as part of the 4th

industrial revolution in agriculture. It is young people who are fascinated by the use of modern technology to run businesses and production processes.

This BRICS Meeting of Ministers is also a build up towards the BRICS Head of States Summit to be hosted by this country under the auspices of our President, Ramaphosa. It is here where ratifications of the key proposals will be done and therefore inform BRICS going forward.

I want to take this opportunity to thank the College for remaining as one of the best in the country in terms of producing agricultural graduates who joins our sectors either as professional agriculturalists or as farmers themselves. This is one college that is leading in wine production by the students. Wine production in Western Cape as an industry is untrammelled and is a major contributor to the country's GDP. The continuous production of wine distillers is at the best interest of the whole country, not only Western Cape. The country needs a new generation of farmers to take over from the current ageing farmers. The average commercial farmer is 73 years of age and in few years will be retiring and so we need a new younger generation to be well mentored by these elders to take over.

Our visit here today is to engage with all of you and seek inputs for what you think we need to sponsor in the BRICS meeting of Ministers for agriculture. As Ministers we don't possess all the wisdom to provide all the solutions. We are here to consult with you and get views.

I thank you.

