



MEDIA STATEMENT
For immediate release
Monday, 16 March 2020

**THE SOUTH AFRICAN UNITED BUSINESS CONFEDERATION (SAUBC)
LAUDS PRESIDENT RAMAPHOSA'S "MEASURES TO COMBAT
CORONAVIRUS COVID-19 EPIDEMIC".**

Sunday, 15 March 2020, the President of the Republic of South Africa, Mr. Cyril Ramaphosa addressed the nation on measures to combat COVID-19 Epidemic. The South African United Business Confederation (SAUBC) welcomes the opportunity to comment on the stamen on "Measures to combat Coronavirus COVID-19 epidemic."

SAUBC supports all measures highlighted by the President to fight Covid-19 such as mass education about preventative actions of the virus and travel bans on foreign nationals from high risk countries such as Italy, South Korea, Germany, Spain, United States, United Kingdom and China as from 18 March 2020.

The President mentioned that the world is facing a severe medical emergency far graver than what we have experienced in over a century which the World Health Organisation (WHO) has now declared the virus outbreak a global pandemic. Currently, there are more than 162 000 people who have tested positive for the virus globally with 61 confirmed cases in South Africa of which is expected to increase in the coming days and weeks.

George Sebelela, President of SAUBC said "as global business leaders we raise our hands and stand up in the spirit of Thuma- Mina (Send Me) and we will continue to support our President, as well as to reinforce the exceptional guidance and management presented by Health Minister Mr. Zweli Mkhize, various government departments and key stakeholders such as the WHO."

"SAUBC would like to encourage provincial governments and municipalities to establish and implement their national government's measures to combat Coronavirus COVID-19 epidemic. Members of the SAUBC are also ready to volunteer in these efforts", George added.

This will enable all South Africans to have an integrated and coordinated disaster management mechanism that will focus on preventing and reducing the outbreak of this virus.



The President denoted to the potential detrimental impact on our economy that the Covid-19 virus will have. This will aggravate the economic calamity we are already undergoing as society, and SAUBC will closely work with government and labour to further mitigate the economic, health and social risks posed by the virus.

News24 yesterday published “By lunch time yesterday, the JSE’s all share index was down 12% as global panic selling intensified. Last week, the JSE lost 15% of its value — and suffered two of its biggest crashes in the past 40 years. Yesterday, the JSE’s all share index dropped by more than 6%, while on Thursday the market lost 9.7%. Financial markets. On Sunday the US central bank announced an emergency interest rate cut of a full percentage point which brought rates to between 0 to 0.25%.

In reaction the rand strengthened initially to 16.06\$, as it is offering at attractive interest rate by comparison. The South Africa repo rate still at around 6.25%. If it stays at current levels, the JSE will suffer its biggest ever market loss - beating the 11.7% fall on 20 October 1987. Otherwise known as Black Monday.”

Mr. Sebelela said that, SAUBC therefore, call upon the President and Parliament to urgently finalize the economic rescue package without delay to respond to the colossal effect of the coronavirus pandemic.

“There is an urgent legislative framework required to include enhanced unemployment benefits, free virus testing, aid for food assistance programs and state funds for Medical Aids. Therefore, the package must also ensures 14 days or more of paid sick leave, as well as tax credits to help small- and medium-size businesses monthly to fulfil their mandate. Furthermore the provisions related to family and medical leave, should be considered”, said Mr. Sebelela.

Moreover, we also urge all our members (Export councils, Business Chambers, Industry associations) strategic partners to ensure that the President’s measures are executed soon as possible, continue the increase awareness of hygiene, to play their part and assist government, strategic stakeholders who have volunteered to assist contain and share factual information about the virus. SAUBC will assist government and ensure frequent dissemination of updated information about COVID-19 on all SAUBC platforms.

“Thank you to President Ramaphosa and his cabinet who has shown leadership in closing schools, and limiting public gatherings to limit the spread of coronavirus. It’s a tough call to make but the right thing to do. United we Stand and Divided we Fall”. Sebelela concluded.



ENDS.

Issued By:

Nomthandazo Tshobeka- SAUBC Communications Officer

For more information:

Ms. Nomthandazo Tshobeka- 076 555 2782

Mr. George Sebelela – SAUBC President- 082 331 5271

Mr. Sello Rasethaba- SAUBC Chairman- 083 325 3847

What is COVID-19?

Is the disease caused by a "novel coronavirus" which originated in Wuhan, China.

Symptoms of coronavirus

- Runny nose
- Headache
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Fever
- Malaise
- Otitis media (more common in children)

Prevention

There are no vaccines available yet against human coronavirus infection. Prevention, therefore, comes down to personal care to reduce the risk of contagion, including:

- Avoid traveling to areas where outbreaks are occurring.
- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Avoid touching the eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people with respiratory symptoms.

What is SAUBC?

South Africa United Business Confederation (SAUBC) is a non-profit & non-racial, business & economic federation that represents cross-cutting business interests in South Africa. SAUBC consists of members representing Export Councils, Industry Associations and Joint Groups (Business Chambers).



SAUBC Goal

The goal of SAUBC as a comprehensive **BUSINESS & ECONOMIC FEDERATION**, is to **CONTRIBUTE TO THE SELF-SUSTAINED DEVELOPMENT OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN ECONOMY** and the **IMPROVEMENT OF THE LIVES OF CITIZENS**, by drawing out the dynamism, capacity & experience of Export Councils, Industry Associations, Joint Action Groups & Corporations as well as interact with Government, Labour & Communities that support them.

SAUBC Vision

To make South Africa the best and preferred investment destination.