

**03 July 2026**

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**MEDIA RELEASE**

**Free State Concludes Strategic Industrial Showcase for Incoming South African Global Diplomats**

**BLOEMFONTEIN, SOUTH AFRICA – 2 July 2026** – The Free State Development Corporation (FDC), in partnership with the Maluti-A-Phofung Special Economic Zone (MAPSEZ), has successfully concluded a comprehensive two-day provincial showcase for incoming Foreign Economic Representative (FER) Designates from the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition (dtic).

The delegation, comprising officials who will be deployed to various South African embassies and missions across the globe from July 2026, visited the Free State as part of the dtic's Foreign Economic Representative Capacity Development Programme. These representatives play a critical role in advancing South Africa's economic diplomacy by promoting trade, attracting investment, and facilitating industrial development in international markets.

The programme commenced on Wednesday, 1 July 2026, at the Protea Hotel Willow Lake in Bloemfontein, where the Chairperson of the FDC Board Dr N.H Masithela officially welcomed the delegation. The first day focused on strategic presentations and engagements designed to provide the incoming representatives with a comprehensive overview of the Free State's investment opportunities, export development initiatives, industrial capabilities, and broader economic landscape.

Demonstrating a collaborative provincial approach to economic development, the sessions brought together key public sector stakeholders to showcase the province's coordinated efforts in driving investment, industrialisation, and inclusive economic growth.

The second and final day, held on Thursday, 2 July 2026, shifted from strategic discussions to practical engagement. The FDC and MAPSEZ led the delegation on a site visit to the Industrial Park, providing the representatives with firsthand exposure

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Duly constituted in terms of Free State Development Corporation Act 6 of 1995

**DIRECTORS:**

Dr. N.H. Masithela (Chairperson); Ms. T.V. Tobias (Deputy Chairperson); Ms. V.F. Ramela; Ms. B.F. Nakedi; Ms. M.J. Ntshingila; Mr. S. Mndawe; Dr. J.M. Laubscher; Dr. M.E. Mosola (Acting Chief Executive Officer); Mr. R.J. Montshioa (Company Secretary)

to the park's infrastructure, operational facilities, available investment sites, and industrial potential.

The site visit enabled the incoming diplomats to gain a practical understanding of the province's industrial assets and investment readiness. Armed with this firsthand experience, they are now better positioned to confidently promote the Free State's competitive advantages, engage potential investors, and facilitate new trade and investment opportunities in the international markets where they will be stationed.

The FDC and MAPSEZ extend their sincere appreciation to the delegation from the dtic for their engagement, valuable insights, and shared commitment to advancing sustainable industrialisation, trade, and economic growth within the Free State Province.

**Editor's Note:**

The Foreign Economic Representatives (FERs) serve as South Africa's economic frontline abroad, linking international markets, global investors, and businesses directly with provincial and national industrial opportunities to attract foreign direct investment (FDI).

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