

For immediate release

## **SUCCESSFUL INAUGURAL PLASTICS PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE MEETING CONVENES IN CAPE TOWN**

**CAPE TOWN, 5 September 2023.** The Cape Chamber of Commerce and Industry took a significant step towards fostering sustainable growth and economic development in the province by hosting the first-ever Plastics Portfolio Committee meeting in Cape Town. The discussions, held under the auspices of the Chamber, brought together key stakeholders from the plastics manufacturing and recycling sectors to address pressing issues and explore collaborative strategies for industry advancement in the region.

Led by Mr. John Lawson, CEO of the Cape Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and Mr. Anton Hanekom, Executive Director of Plastics SA, the meeting marked a pivotal moment in the Chamber's pursuit of catalysing the Western Cape economy.

“The Chamber's core mission revolves around interfacing with diverse sectors, linking opportunities, and collaborating with local government entities, Eskom, and other vital stakeholders in order to address pressing challenges that businesses face in the province, all while nurturing growth and innovation,” Lawson explained. He highlighted the importance of empowering Western Cape businesses to shape their destiny and the Chamber's role in unifying individual associations into a cohesive collective with a view to enhancing the business ecosystem.

“We have an unwavering commitment to confront the challenges businesses in our province are facing head-on, devise strategies, amplify competitiveness, and facilitate access to governmental funding support,” he said.

Hanekom underscored the paramount importance of the plastics sector and its substantial contribution to the nation's GDP. Recognizing the symbiotic relationship between small and large manufacturers, he also emphasized the imperative to bolster their competitive prowess, elevate community engagement, and generate employment opportunities.

“This inaugural Plastics Portfolio Committee meeting aptly captured the spirit of collaboration and determination, essential for realizing these ambitions. It couldn't have come at a more critical juncture as South Africa's prevailing waste management system is undoubtedly in need of reform. Another pressing concern which we need to address is the challenges posed by imports that undermine the local plastics industry. Many products that are currently imported into the country could have been produced domestically, and this trend contributes to a significant trade deficit. The discussions underscored the need to unlock opportunities for economic growth by revamping the waste management system and fostering domestic production,” Hanekom reported.

As the Cape Chamber of Commerce and Industry continues to champion the growth of the Western Cape, all parties agreed that this initiative holds a significant promise. Plastics industry role-players in the Western Cape are encouraged to participate in future discussions as they identify priority projects that will make a quick and effective difference to businesses in the area, help create more jobs and unlock opportunities for future growth.

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Lawson says the establishment and expansion of the Plastics Portfolio Committee signify a profound commitment to addressing industry-specific challenges and harnessing the potential of plastics manufacturing and recycling. “We believe a successful blueprint can be developed that could serve as a beacon for other provinces across South Africa. The ambition to create a replicable model underscores the Chamber's commitment to driving holistic change, transcending regional boundaries”.

“The inaugural Plastics Portfolio Committee meeting convened by the Cape Chamber of Commerce and Industry stands as a testament to proactive collaboration, visionary leadership, and a shared commitment to transformative growth. As we continue to take hands with public and private entities to nurture businesses, influence policy, and stimulate economic development, the impact of these partnerships will reverberate around the country. With the plastics sector poised to play a pivotal role in South Africa's future, this landmark meeting lays a foundation for a more sustainable, resilient, and prosperous tomorrow,” Hanekom concludes.

For more information on the Cape Chamber of Commerce & Industry, visit [www.capechamber.co.za](http://www.capechamber.co.za)  
For more information on Plastics SA, visit [www.plasticsinfo.co.za](http://www.plasticsinfo.co.za)

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*FLTR: John Lawson (Cape Chamber of Commerce & Industry), Andrew Johnston (Extruform), Monique Holtzhausen (SA Vinyls Association), Patricia Pillay (Polyco), Karl Lambrecht (Polyoak Packaging) and Anton Hanekom (Plastics SA).*