

# Joint Initiative on Priority Skills Acquisition



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# The skills constraint on growth

- ❑ The shortage of skills is one of the 'binding constraints' on growth and development identified by ASGISA, and by foreign investors and South African business alike
- ❑ Research has shown that the *types* of skills produced, as well as the *quality* of skills, are of critical importance
- ❑ Together with other policies and initiatives, the National Human Resource Development Strategy and the 2<sup>nd</sup> National Skills Development Strategy are medium to longer-term strategies that have been put in place to address education and skills development in South Africa
- ❑ Within these broader frameworks, JIPSA is a significant initiative by the social partners to ensure the acquisition of priority skills needed for the economy

# Priority skills



- JIPSA has identified the following priority skills areas, all of which are receiving focused and urgent attention:
  - High-level engineering and planning skills for the 'network industries' – water, energy, transport, communications
  - Town and regional planners: JIPSA has recognised that government needs to give greater attention to the planning function
  - Engineers, technicians and technologists, artisans
    - We need an additional 1000 professional engineers p.a.
    - A target of 50,000 artisans over the next four years has been set; this is a *conservative* figure
  - Planning and management skills in the health and education sectors
  - Maths, science, ICT and communication in schools: JIPSA is seeking to augment existing DoE initiatives such as the Dinaledi schools



# Skills for ASGISA

- ❑ In addition, JIPSA is working on skills acquisition related to a number of ASGISA priority areas; these include
  - Business Process Outsourcing
  - Biofuels
  - ICT
  - Tourism
- ❑ JIPSA coordinates an extensive placement and internship programme in partnership with a number of foreign and local companies and foreign governments; this is currently being reviewed, with a view to strengthening the initiative, and additional partners will be needed
- ❑ JIPSA is receiving positive support and cooperation from the Departments of Home and Foreign Affairs and other role-players regarding the importation of scarce skills and will actively recruit abroad in the coming year



# SA is serious about skills

- A remarkable fact of JIPSA's 18-month existence is the high level of buy-in and support that it has enjoyed, from the great majority of role-players; it can confidently be said that
  - South Africans are acutely aware of the skills challenge and serious about addressing this
  - There is considerable willingness and commitment amongst all role-players – government departments, the private sector, professional bodies and statutory authorities, education and training institutions and others – to do what is right and necessary for the country, and to transcend institutional and sectoral interests in order to achieve a common goal
  - The pragmatic, problem-solving and cooperative approach adopted by JIPSA is widely welcomed by role-players who traditionally have not been used to working together, and is beginning to achieve results
- After 18 months, we can begin to identify some of the key building-blocks which are creating a platform for future success:
  - The fact that JIPSA is a *joint* initiative of the social partners
  - JIPSA's focus on a limited number of *priority skills*
  - The successful mobilisation and voluntary commitment of a wide range of independent role-players and 'project owners'
  - Adoption of a practical, problem solving approach



# Joining forces for skills

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- ❑ Government Departments have joined forces to support JIPSA objectives – key examples are in the areas of artisan training, where the Department of Labour has played an active role, and the importation of scarce and critical skills, where the scarce skills quota list has been updated by the Department of Home Affairs and will be promoted abroad by Foreign Affairs
- ❑ Other role-players, for example the Higher Education sector, the Engineering Council and the Council for the Built Environment, are actively involved
- ❑ In response to JIPSA, employers in SA have established a Technical Business Skills Partnership (TBSP) to rebuild the stock of artisan and engineering skills
- ❑ Business leaders will announce later this month a new Business Skills Commitment and programme of action



# A better life for all

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- Investors and foreign companies operating in SA could make a significant impact by
  - Supporting existing partnerships and initiatives such as the Dinaledi schools and the TBSP
  - Offering placements and internships
  - Providing technical expertise and support

*At a recent JIPSA function, the President observed that the struggle for education and skills, in the present era, is no less important than the anti-apartheid struggle of a previous era, and deserved the same level of national and international commitment and support. It should be a matter of corporate pride, the President said, for companies to engage wholeheartedly in this new arena of struggle for a better life for all.*