

## **Chemicals Imbizo**

### *Promoting Investment and growth in the chemicals manufacturing sector*

The first Chemicals Imbizo, hosted by the Durban Chemicals Cluster at Moses Mabhida Stadium, saw various key players in the chemicals value chain come together and create linkages within the industry. The definition of an Imbizo is a “gathering”, the primary objective of the Chemicals Imbizo is to promote growth in the chemicals sector and create employment. Due to the local sector’s limitations, the DCC has recognised that there is a need to bring together industry not only on a local level but create linkages across Africa. The first ever Imbizo hosted over 150 industry representatives that participated in the various activities which included business linkage meetings, sector conference and exhibition. Facilitated by B&M Analysts, the sector conference included both public and private experiences in the chemicals sector and covered government policy for the chemicals sector, unlocking trade opportunities, the supply chain war, incentives for the industry and Lean in the chemicals industry.

Speakers included Cllr Logie Naidoo - Executive Committee Councillor and Speaker of the eThekweni Municipality, Ms Claudy Steyn – Chief Director: Plastics Department of Trade & Industry, Ms Lumka Sibanyoni - Executive Manager: Knowledge Management, Trade & Investment KwaZulu Natal, Mr Denvor Govender - Global Supply Chain Manager, AELS Mining Services, Mr Rika Gopichund - Senior Manager IDC: Basic Chemical Value Chain and Matt van Wyk - Associate Director: MAC Consulting.

“It is vitally important that these partnerships between government and the chemicals industry take place” says Claudy Steyn of the dti who started the day off by encouraging the chemicals sector to play a more important role in South African manufacturing and engage more with the dti to develop Special Economic Zones.

Cllr Logie Naidoo continued to emphasize the importance of public-private partnerships and encouraged manufacturers to expand as he stated that “The Port of Durban could be the gateway to Africa”, a strong theme which continued throughout the day. TIKZN shared the KwaZulu-Natal export-trade portal which is a tool provided for exporting companies. Attendees also had the opportunity to learn from successful companies that have expanded their business beyond South Africa’s borders through ensuring that they have a strong supply chain strategy.

“There is a supply chain war that has emerged... companies who are agile, responsive and willing to evolve will survive...” Denvor Govender of AECL AELS Mining Services focused on the importance of supply chain within any company and the opportunities on this continent. Govender highlighted that key aspects that will lead to success in Africa is customer centricity, collaboration and diversification. Adding to this focus on companies constantly evolving, Matt van Wyk, shared best practices in the chemicals industry with regards to Lean manufacturing.

In addition to the sector conference, participants visited the exhibition area which included various chemicals manufacturers and stakeholders who showcased products and capabilities to the attendees. Various chemical manufacturing firms also participated in business linkage meetings, the primary goal of the meetings was to create a platform for buyers and suppliers to link around localisation and export opportunities. The Imbizo also played host to a delegation of businesses from various African countries including Namibia, Zimbabwe, Mauritius and Kenya.

“The Chemicals Imbizo is a great opportunity to link and dialogue with players in the chemicals value chain,” says DCC Chairperson Robin Archer. The success of this year’s Imbizo will position the Imbizo as a key activity on the chemicals calendar to drive investment and growth in this sector.