



INTERNET ARTICLE

Water Infrastructure Investment Summit not privatising water Industry, says Minister Mokonyane

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The Water Infrastructure Investment Summit (WIIS) has elevated the efforts of the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) to new heights through its calling for investment of an array of role-players into the water sector.

Speaking on the side line of the WIIS, which took place at the Sandton Convention Centre on 05 December 2017, Minister Nomvula Mokonyane said the intention of the Summit was not to privatise the water industry but rather to provide a platform for stakeholders to carve out a role in terms of investment in the sector.

Minister Mokonyane said it was not the role of government alone to invest in the water industry, reiterating that the private sector had a critical role to play and that this would signal a break with the culture of reliance on the government.

“Our country needs to be open to get business having interest in the development of our economy because all along dependency has been on the public sector making the investment. The participants in the Summit do realise that the water, agriculture and energy are the new gold,” said Minister Mokonyane.

Addressing the delegates, Minister Mokonyane said: “Like South Africa, many developing countries need water infrastructure to improve the livelihoods of their citizens and their quality of life. While there are many constraints to the delivery of water infrastructure, one of the most obvious factors that hampers delivery is project finance.”

She said her first goal was to seek a new partnership with the business and investment sector to ensure water security in South Africa in a manner that ensures access to safe water and sanitation universally and in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Minister Mokonyane’s counterpart, Energy Minister David Mahlobo, congratulated Minister Mokonyane and the entire water sector for convening the Summit, saying that without investment in the infrastructure whether in water or energy economic growth would not be achieved.

He said investment in infrastructure was most important during the time of slow economic growth, adding that infrastructure must be able to stimulate economic growth to change the economic fortunes of the country and create jobs.

Minister Mahlobo emphasised the relationship between the water and energy, saying for energy to be generated water played a key role and that similarly for energy was for water to be supplied to consumers.

He said they were acutely aware about the water and energy having economic aspects and therefore to be used to create the necessary environment for a thriving economy.

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