



**PRESS RELEASE
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**MEGA GIVES TASTE OF
OPPORTUNITIES IN URUGUAY**

MEGA hosted a business breakfast in Witbank on Thursday 17th September 2009 with the Ambassador of the Oriental Republic of Uruguay, His Excellency Mr P Guillermo as the key note speaker.

During the breakfast, the Ambassador was able to highlight the trade and joint venture opportunities with the South American country of Uruguay to the business community of Mpumalanga.

From a historically low trade base, growth is being experienced; with the two way trade between South Africa and Uruguay in 2008 being valued at R1.6billion. Exports from South Africa to Uruguay accounted for R1, 4 billion and imports were valued at R187 million.

The major imports from Uruguay include:

- Animal Products
- Raw Hides and Skins Leather
- Vegetable Products
- Products of the Chemical or Allied Industries
- Wood & Articles of Wood
- Animal or Vegetable Fats & Oils

The major exports to Uruguay include:

- Base Metals and Articles of Base Metal
- Plastics and Articles; thereof; Rubber & Articles
- Products of the Chemical

The Breakfast was attended by in excess of 100 businessmen and women, including MEGA Board Members Mr. Thabo Thwala and Mr. Lucky Jacobs.

MEGA was also delighted to host Executive Mayor Ms Manthlakeng Mahlangu from Steve Tshwete Local Municipality and Executive Mayor Ms Linah Masellane Malatjie from eMalahlni Local Municipality. Counsellor M Chembeni Sahi was in also attendance representing the Mayor from Ehlanzeni District Municipality.

The Ambassador of the Oriental Republic of Uruguay in his key note address outlined the healthy state of the Uruguayan economy. He said, “we escaped the world economic crises and the financial melt down essentially due to prudent macro-economic planning, high literacy and low unemployment rate.”

He added, ‘in 2008 the GDP was \$32.3 billion with a growth rate of 8 percent; the FDI which accounted for 0.5% of the GDP in the mid-1990s had increased to 5.27% in 2008.’

The international economic crises and the financial meltdown has resulted in the slow down of our own economy, forcing MEGA to become more innovative in identifying new market and business opportunities.

Ms Pinkie Nqeto, HOD: Trade & Investment, MEGA said that “this breakfast, the first of many to be held in different regions of the Province of Mpumalanga, is intended to provided exposure and sensitize the business community of Mpumalanga to new and unexplored foreign markets. For example, Uruguay is a country with striking similarities with the Province of Mpumalanga in terms of size and economic profile.”

In 2008, the size of the Uruguay economy by GDP was R32.3 billion, and Mpumalanga was R20,25 \$billion. The major components of both economies are manufacturing and agricultural sectors, therefore there are a number of sectors where the two countries can cooperate.

In line with its South South approach a MEGA’s Trade and Investment Division is also announcing that later on in the year it will take a business delegations to selected countries in the Far East (Vietnam, Malaysia and Thailand) and Eastern Europe (Poland Czech Republic and Romania). Interested persons should contact Paresh Pandya –paresh@mega .gov.za

For further Information Contact

Samantha Beresford
Mpumalanga Economic Growth Agency
Acting Manager: Marketing & Communications
Telephone (078 247 0065
Fax (013) 752 2468

Paresh Pandya
Mpumalanga Economic Growth Agency
Manager: Trade & Investment Promotion
Telephone (011) 440 5757
082 905 4938
Fax (011)440 5745

Images Attached

For your convenience we have attached images of the breakfast:

Picture One

H.E Mr. Guillermo Pomi: the Ambassador of the Oriental Republic of Uruguay addressing the business community at the breakfast.

Picture Two

(L to R)

Ms Pinkie Nqeto, MEGA's Head of Trade & Investment Division: MEGA, Executive Mayor Ms Linah Masellane Malatjie, of eMalahlani Local Municipality, H.E Mr. Guillermo Pomi: the Ambassador of the Oriental Republic of Uruguay, Executive Mayor Ms Manthlakeng Mahlangu from Steve Tshwete Local Municipality, Clr M Chembeni Sahi representing the Mayor from Ehlanzeni District Municipality and Mr. Paresh Pandya Manager Trade & Investment Division: MEGA

Picture Three

(L to R)

Mr Ebrahim Patel Senior Vice President Middelburg chamber of Commerce, Mr. Lucky Jacobs MEGA Director, Ms Pinkie Nqeto, MEGA's Head of Trade & Investment Division, Executive Mayor Ms Linah Masellane Malatjie of eMalahlani Local Municipality, H.E Mr. Guillermo Pomi: the Ambassador of the Oriental Republic of Uruguay, Mr. Paresh Pandya Manager Trade & Investment Division: MEGA, Mr. Thabo Thwala MEGA Director Executive Mayor Ms Manthlakeng Mahlangu of Steve Tshwete Local Municipality, and Clr. M Chembeni Sahi representing the Mayor from Ehlanzeni District Municipality

Picture Four

(L to R)

Mr. Lucky Jacobs MEGA Director, Ms Pinkie Nqeto, MEGA's Head of Trade & Investment Division, H.E Mr. Guillermo Pomi: the Ambassador of the Oriental Republic of Uruguay, Mr. Paresh Pandya Manager Trade & Investment Division: MEGA, Mr. Thabo Thwala MEGA Director and Mr. Ebrahim Patel Senior Vice President Middelburg chamber of Commerce,

Editors Notes

The Mpumalanga Economic Growth Agency was formed in terms of the MEGA Act (Act No. 4 of 2005) through a merger of the Mpumalanga Economic Empowerment Corporation and Mpumalanga Investment Initiative. The Act was promulgated in phases to facilitate a smooth transition to the new legal entity. MEGA became fully operational, and commenced its business activities, on April 1st, 2006. MEGA is accountable to the Mpumalanga Department of Economic Development and Planning.

In terms of Section 3(1) of the Act, the legal mandate of MEGA incorporates the following broad objectives:

- To promote trade and investment
- To support enterprise development;
- To provide funding in respect of approved enterprise development focusing on HDIs within the province; and
- To focus on project management, development and management of immovable property.

MEGA is a Schedule III entity governed by a duly elected Board of Directors, acting as the Accounting Authority, in terms of Section 5(1) of the Act, and as contemplated in Section 49(2)(a) of the PFMA. Section 5(3) of the Act stipulates that the Board shall consist of not fewer than nine (9) members and not more than eleven (11) members eligible to vote at Board

meetings. In addition, the Head of the Department (HoD), as the Accounting Officer of the Agency, or any other person so designated by the HoD, is an ex officio member of the Board without voting powers.

The Board is accountable to the Member of the Executive Council in the execution of its powers, functions and duties through a mutually agreed Shareholder's Compact.

MEGA's central role is to assist the Provincial Government in its drive to grow the economy in a manner that reduces unemployment and poverty, and facilitates the systematic and sustainable entry of HDIs into the formal economy. MEGA is, therefore, envisioned to play a pivotal role in the implementation of the Government's Provincial Growth and Development Strategy (PGDS).