

HRDC meeting kicks off with focus on skilling youth

Deputy President David Mabuza has called on the youth to take up skills that will develop and serve the needs of the economy.



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The Deputy President made the remarks at the 20th meeting of HRDC at the University of South Africa (UNISA) Science Campus in Florida, Gauteng, before chairing a closed meeting.

Mabuza, who is the chairperson of the HRDC, was flanked by the Ministers of Higher Education and Training Naledi Pandor; Performance Monitoring and Evaluation, Dr Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma and Labour, Mildred Oliphant on a guided tour of the science campus.

“It must surely be in the interest of the Human Resource Development Council (HRDC) to pay close attention to Roodepoort’s informal economy because here we will find South Africa’s story of innovation and endless possibility in the face of socio-economic hardships.

“We hope that institutions like UNISA will continue to encourage its students to collaborate with our communities to work together to find answers that will address the developmental needs of our people,” said Mabuza.

The UNISA green campus boasts state-of-the-art facilities, houses 12 buildings, a library, two auditoriums and a large study area.

“The campus has been designed with the environment in mind. It offers state-of-the-art facilities. The laboratories are for teaching, learning and research purposes. The laboratories offer high end equipment. These will advance science education and research at a national level,” said UNISA Vice Chancellor Mandla Makhanya.

The facilities are a culmination of partnerships and collaborations between UNISA and industry stakeholders, as seen with the Nanotechnology and Water and Sustainability (NanoWS) Research Unit.

The NanoWS unit, which is used for the desalination of water, comes with a R30 million price tag.

Makhanya said such facilities give students, who choose institutions of open learning, a chance to take up opportunities in science.

“We are harnessing our resources capacity and infrastructure to the benefit of our students who have chosen UNISA as their alma mater and have never before had the opportunity to study the sciences as a result of limitations around facilities.

“It is our belief and desire that this facility will contribute in growing the number of science and technology students, scientists and researchers in the country and on our continent primarily and also abroad,” he said.

NanoWS gives life to the HRDC’s vision to seek collaborations between higher education institutions and industry.

The guided tour of the campus served as a precursor to the HRDC meeting, which is set to discuss how the HRDC, the Higher Education Department and other stakeholders can boost these types of partnerships.

Benefitting the economy

Launched in 2010, the HRDC mobilises various stakeholders behind the country’s Human Resource Development Strategy towards 2030. The strategy aims to develop skills in line with the needs of the country’s economy.

The meeting is set to discuss a research study report on the nature and extent of partnerships between the post schooling institutions and industry.

The HRDC will also receive a presentation on the implementation of artisan training done through collaboration with the Higher Education and Training Department and the Department of Public Enterprises.

The meeting will further receive a progress report on the establishment of the credible, institutional mechanism for skills planning in the country.

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