



**AUSTRALIAN HIGH COMMISSION
SOUTH AFRICA**

**Mining Indaba 2013
Ministers' and Ambassadors' Luncheon
Tuesday 5 February 2013**

Remarks by Australian High Commissioner, HE Mr Graeme Wilson

Welcome remarks

[Welcome also to be delivered in French, with additional note that French translations of your address are available on the registration table at the entrance to the lunch venue]

Good afternoon, Ladies and Gentlemen.

My name is Graeme Wilson. As you might have heard this morning, I am Australia's brand new High Commissioner to South Africa. It is a great pleasure to be attending my first Mining Indaba in the warm afterglow of presenting my credentials to President Zuma last week. I am also Australia's High Commissioner or Ambassador-designate to six other southern African countries.

I, together with five of my fellow Australian Ambassadors and High Commissioners based in Africa, I will be your host for this lunch today at the 2013 Mining Indaba. And it is a genuine pleasure be welcoming you here today.

First of all, I would like to acknowledge the presence of Ministers, Deputy Ministers and senior mining officials from over 20 African countries. It is our very great honour to have you here with us today.

I would like to thank the sponsors for today's lunch – BHP-Billiton – and I will be inviting the Chairman of BHP-Billiton South Africa, Dr Xolani Mkhwanazi (Mk-wa-nazi), to say a few words to you a little later.

I would also like to thank the representatives from the 55 Australian companies who are here today and whose participation with the Australian government has helped to ensure that once again Australia has one of the highest profiles of any

country here at Indaba – reflecting of course our significant presence on the African continent and our international leadership in the resources sector.

Finally I'd like to thank Mr Kristian Benton for welcoming you all here today with his fantastic didgeridoo music. Mr Benton is visiting South Africa to enhance awareness of Australia's rich indigenous culture and music. You can also catch him performing this afternoon and on Wednesday at 4pm at the Australia Lounge downstairs.

Before we serve entrees, I would like to introduce you to my Australian Government colleagues who are here today. They are a very friendly group and I think it would be worthwhile getting to know them, whether you represent an African government or whether you are an Australian company. *[You have a brochure on your table providing contact details and countries of accreditation for all of the Ambassadors and High Commissioners so in the interests of time I will just introduce them and then you can follow-up with them either at today's lunch or during the course of the week at the Minister's lounge on the mezzanine floor where we will be basing ourselves].*

Mathew Neuhaus is based in Harare. [Zimbabwe, Malawi, Zambia, DRC]

Geoff Tooth is based in Nairobi [Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda, Uganda, Burundi, South Sudan, Somalia].

Jon Richardson is based in Abuja [Nigeria, The Gambia, Congo, Benin, Gabon, Niger, and Cameroon].

Joanna Adamson is based in Accra [Ghana, Sierra Leone and Ambassador to Liberia, Burkina Faso, Cote D'Ivoire, Guinea, Mali, Senegal and Togo].

And Lisa Filipetto is based in Addis Ababa [African Union, Ethiopia and Djibouti].

We are also joined today by John Madew, the Senior Trade Commissioner for sub-Saharan Africa, Gordon Chakaodza, Trade Commissioner for West Africa, as well as AusAID's Minister Counsellor based in Pretoria, Jamie Isbister.

With those introductions, Ladies & Gentlemen, I will leave you to enjoy your entrees. Before we move on to the main course, I will give you an update on the Australian government's engagement in the mining sector in Africa.

(ENTRÉE SERVED)

Australian Mining and Resources Interests in Africa

Ladies and Gentlemen

Along with my other government colleagues, I am always proud to advocate the story of Australian commercial engagement in Africa – because it is a story that is positive and dynamic – and a story that just keeps getting better.

Despite the difficult global economic conditions in recent years, the scale of Australian resources sector interests in Africa has continued expanding.

There are over 200 ASX-listed mining and resources companies operating 700 or more projects across Africa.

Australian minerals and resource companies have more projects in Africa than in any other region of the world. These projects are estimated to be worth close to USD\$50 billion in current and projected investment.

And we have also seen a fundamental shift in the Australian government's approach to providing support for the mining sector.

As a result of our discussions with Ministers such as yourselves – and also because Australia is a resource-rich country with substantial experience in both mining and development – an important part of Australia's development assistance program in Africa is now focused on assisting African governments to maximise the social and economic benefits of the resources sector.

As many of you here know, in late 2011, the Australian Prime Minister launched the Australian Government's Mining for Development (M4D) Initiative.

Through this initiative, we are looking to support African countries in implementing the AU-endorsed 'Africa Mining Vision'.

We are offering support to the vision in very practical ways. For instance, Australia is partnering with the African Union (AU), the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and the African Development Bank (AfDB) in the development of the African Minerals Development Centre (AMDC). The role of the Centre will be to coordinate activities of the multiple actors in Africa's minerals sector in pursuit of the objectives of the African Mining Vision. In addition to supporting the design of the Centre, Australia is providing \$5million over the next two years for its establishment.

As in Australia, skills gaps in the African minerals sector pose a barrier to leveraging the full potential development benefits of mining. This is why skills development is also a strong focus of Australia's Mining for Development cooperation with African countries:

- Since 2011, we have hosted more than 400 officials from 32 African countries, on mining study tours to Australia.
- These study tours enable officials to visit our regional centres and see first-hand both the positive and negative of Australia's experience in managing our mineral wealth.
- The Australian Government is also offering a range of education, training and professional development opportunities through our Australia Awards scholarships program. A total of 145 mining-related short course and masters-level scholarships were delivered to participants from 35 African countries in 2012.

An enduring lesson from Australia's experience in developing and managing its mineral wealth has been the need for collaboration and partnership – between government, industry, civil society, communities and a myriad of other stakeholders.

The Australian Government recognises this. The Government's international development agency, AusAID, has clear civil society and business engagement strategies and works with a range of partners in the delivery of our mining for development programs in Africa.

For instance, some of the companies here today, such as Rio Tinto, BHP Billiton, Paladin Energy and Newmont have assisted in the delivery of study tours in Australia.

We welcome and encourage further cooperation from industry in the delivery of mineral skills initiatives. Closer, coordinated cooperation between governments, industry and development partners such as ourselves, is vital to address the skills challenges I have mentioned.

Finally, as many of you know, Australia is also a leading donor on the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative, including through the provision of A\$12.7 million toward global EITI implementation. We look forward to hosting the EITI Global Conference in Sydney in May this year.

Australia has also recently decided to join the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights initiative – which promotes implementation of practical human rights guidelines for the security operations of companies working in the mining, oil and gas industries. We look forward to promoting best practice in mine site security through the initiative and would encourage the companies here today to support the initiative, if they have not done so already.

Thank you. I would now like to introduce Dr Xolani Mkhwanazi (Mk-wa-nazi), Chairman BHP-Billiton South Africa, our principal sponsor, to say a few words.

(MAIN COURSE SERVED AFTER DR X's SPEECH)

Concluding remarks

Ladies and Gentlemen

We are coming to the end of our lunch.

I would like to thank you all for joining us.

To the African Ministers, deputy ministers and senior officials who are with us today I do encourage you to find out more about how the Australian government can work in partnership with you to effectively manage your mining sectors, including by talking to Australian government officials throughout this week.

And we also encourage you to get to know our Australian business people. Of course Australian companies want to run successful operations – but they are also there to support and grow the private sectors in your economies in ways that will benefit your citizens.

So please visit the Australia Lounge as often as you can – we look forward to seeing you there.

Thank you.