

Exports councils vital to stimulate economic transformation

Export councils are key drivers for South Africa's economic transformation and they should be supported and prioritised. This is according to Lerato Mataboge, deputy director-general for trade and investment South Africa at the Department of Trade and Industry (the dti), who was addressing the two-day Export Council Quarterly Meeting that started in Pretoria this week.



“As government, we need to look at our efficiencies in so far as how we are structured, and the support that is provided to export councils and vice versa. We also need to determine if we are really working cohesively and supporting each other in accessing new markets, determining the strategy for which markets are a priority for the country, and determining which companies and exporters are in need of what kind of support. This is the role that we as government and export councils jointly play because that is where transformation is going to happen,” said Mataboge.

She continued that there's a need to find a way for export councils to coordinate better amongst themselves by looking at the clustering approach in order to make sure that they drive the economic strategy of the country. She said the clusters would enable the government and export councils to have an impact on the continent, in the BRICS economies, and the broader global market.

“Export councils together with the dti need to find a niche in order to have a say in the presidential R100 billion investment drive because investments and exports are intertwined. We also have to have a relook at the Integrated National Export Strategy in light of the 6% per annum export target that the National Development Plan has set for us. We need to reflect and see what contribution are we making to enable us to reach that target and also to make sure that we take a step back and look at the institutional arrangements that we have and whether or not they are assisting in driving our export agenda,” she said.



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Mataboge added that there was a need to discuss the recommendation of the Integrated National Export Strategy, and

consider having a National Export Act that will pull together all the elements that speak to exports and the role of the export councils.

Export councils are an integral part of government's plan to grow exports, diversify product offerings, broaden markets and develop exporters through the mobilisation of black-, women- and youth-owned enterprises, as well as emerging exporters.

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