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THE NATIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND LABOUR COUNCIL  
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## MEDIA RELEASE

### **NEDLAC TRADE AND INDUSTRY CHAMBER RESEARCH SESSION ON LABOUR-INTENSIVE SECTORS AND ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES**

### **STATUS IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

26 September 2007

Unemployment remains a key concern of NEDLAC and the Trade and Industry Chamber. Finding ways to develop sectors and economic activities that absorb the country's labour in a sustainable manner is one of the key programmes of the Chamber. The NEDLAC constituencies agreed at the June 2007 bi-annual strategic session, chaired by the Deputy Minister of trade and industry, Dr Rob Davies, to conduct a special research session on the issue.

The session considered trends in the South African economy; current labour intensive trends and options for labour-intensive economic development. Analyses were received from the Bureau for Economic Research, the Industrial Development Corporation, National Labour and Economic Development Institute, and the Human Sciences Research Council. Leading analysts from government, organised business, organised labour and civil society debated the employment scenarios. There was recognition that, despite the progress being made, labour is not being absorbed into formal employment at a sufficient rate to meet the unemployment reduction targets. More needs to be done.

The NEDLAC constituencies recognised that to fulfill our Growth and Development Summit (2003) and ASGISA (2005) commitments to halve unemployment and poverty by 2014 the Chamber is required to refocus its efforts on creating a more diversified and labour-absorbing economy. Moreover, specific measures would be necessary to tackle entrenched levels of structural unemployment. The constituencies further recognised that while the targets are feasible, they can only be attained with increased effort from Government,

Labour and Business. In 2008, the Chamber will be prioritising interventions that are likely to have the most impact on the employment scenarios.

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