



### Annual Summit

**TARGET:** The National Economic Development and Labour Council shall hold one annual summit, which shall be chaired by the President or the Deputy President and shall give constituencies an opportunity to give input on the institution and the issues on its agenda. There shall be eighty representatives of each constituency invited, along with guests from broader civil society, including Parliament, NGOs, other SADC countries.

**Program Performance:** The Annual Summit was successfully held on 27 September 2003.

The Summit was chaired by His Excellency, the Deputy President, **Mr Jacob Zuma**. The focus of the Summit was the Growth and Development Summit Agreements (GDSA) signed by Nedlac's social partners in June 2003.

In his opening address the Deputy President dwelt briefly on the successes of South Africa's first democratic government in uplifting the life of its people through maintaining a resilient economy and providing basic services to a population hitherto denied such services.

His Excellency hailed the role of such institutions of democracy as Nedlac in ensuring inclusive policy formulation in South Africa. He motivated for the involvement of Nedlac in initiatives of international solidarity and social justice towards decreasing the gap between rich and poor and eradicating poverty.

The Deputy President praised the convening of the Growth and Development Summit (GDS) as one of the greatest achievements of Nedlac's social partners to date in that the Summit holistically addressed some of the most fundamental problems facing South Africa today. He expressed confidence in the ability of the social partners to successfully implement the GDS agreements through collective action.

The Summit was also addressed by the Minister of Labour, the Honourable **Membathisi Mdladlana**. In his speech the Minister reaffirmed government's commitment to Nedlac as a forum for social dialogue and a vehicle for participatory democracy. He commended the maturity of the social partners and the evolved state of dialogue in South Africa as evidenced by the signing of the GDS agreements.

**Mr Cas Coovadia**, speaking on behalf of the business constituency, stressed the interdependence of the social partners in addressing the socio-economic needs of the people of South Africa. He announced the formation of a unified representative body for Business whose objectives echo those of the GDS.

**Mr Willie Madisha** spoke on behalf of Organised Labour. He painted a dire picture of the unemployment crisis which the GDS agreements seek to address and expressed Labour's confidence that collective action under the GDS would positively influence socio-economic policy in this regard. Mr Madisha outlined some of the initiatives that the labour movement had already undertaken to promote local procurement, one of the key objectives of the GDS.