

**Dr Boitumelo Diale**

**SACDA Chairperson**

Good morning everyone. Welcome to our first annual congress of the South African Career Development Association. It is a great pleasure for us and it is an honour that we have all of you today celebrating this great day with us.

As the Chairperson, I have the lightest job of all. It is just to make sure that people are comfortable, people understand why we are here and people celebrate the day with us. Let me first acknowledge the presence of our Deputy Minister, Hon Buthi Manamela with us. Thank you so much sir for allowing yourself to have the time to share the day with us and to address us. Let me also acknowledge the presence of our panel members, both internationally and South African, who are going to be sharing with us today. Let me welcome ladies and gentlemen who are sitting here today, who have taken their day today, as all of you saw fit that it is important to have this day with us. Let me thank my board members from SACDA, who made this day possible and helped throughout the process, but it will really be unfair of us, if we really – and I know he doesn't want this to be done, but I'm going to do it and I didn't say. We will fight afterwards – I need you to give a very big round of applause for our CEO in SACDA, Chris Beukes. Chris can you please stand up? I know you don't want this.

I have to say ladies and gentlemen, as the board, we are there. You know boards sit in long meetings and just talk, but there are people who actually make sure that things happen, who are on the ground and they do the day to day running and we are sitting here today because Chris made sure that this happens and did the day to day running. Thank you so much Chris for everything you've done. I know you are extremely exhausted from yesterday already. I promise you, I will give you a glass of Bell's after today. Okay thank you.

I just want to also share this important moment, by acknowledging very important partners for us. As SACDA, we are a very new association, so we couldn't have made this possible. Each and every one of you sitting here today, have a beautiful bag with them, a beautiful T-shirt, they are sitting in a beautiful venue, *nogal* in Emperor's Palace and we are all... nobody really in South Africa goes for a free conference and we are sitting in this luxurious space, free of charge. And it just didn't fall from somewhere, there are important partners with us, as SACDA, who have made this day happen. I want to really thank the following partners of SACDA.

The first one is merSETA. Thank you very much to merSETA as the driving force behind us. Esther I know you're sitting somewhere there and you've played an important role. I'll talk about you later on. I want to thank our ETDP SETA. They are also our second big partners and the driving force to ensure that we really have career development practitioners in this country. I want to thank UNISA. We have had big meetings, we have had brain storming, that they have been part of us and partners with us and accommodated us and also played a big role in today. So to the three big partners with SACDA, from the bottom of my heart as the Chairperson of SACDA, I want to thank each and every one of you, each and every member of that organisation, because you've made this dream come true. Thank you very much.

Without any waste of time, the other important thing for us, yes we have this congress today, which is our first annual congress, but for us as SACDA, the most important thing is that, we will be conferring our first professional designated portfolio. We'll be conferring our first Career Information Officer, designation. They have acquired a professional designation that is the first in the country. It is a big achievement for us.

So later on we would be proud to confer that to ten of people who can go into the history of the books of the country. So we are the first ten people to be recognised as Career Development Practitioners in this country, professionally. So we are really proud of each and every one of you and as we come to that moment, we will be celebrating with you.

