



EVENT REVIEW

MOSIUOA LEKOTA PRESENTATION

Date: 18th March 2009

Venue : Johannesburg Country Club

Speaker : Mosiuoa Lekota, President
COPE, Congress of the People



A cocktail presentation was held by SwissCham Southern Africa – South Africa Chapter at the Johannesburg Country Club, Woodmead on the 18th March 2009 with guest speaker Mosiuoa Lekota, President of COPE, the Congress of the People. Over 50 members and their guests attended this interesting presentation. SwissCham President, Jürg A. Schalch welcomed the guests. A special welcome was also extended to Swiss Ambassador Rudolf Bärffuss who is a dedicated supporter of SwissCham.

SwissCham President Jürg A. Schalch then introduced COPE President Mosiuoa Lekota.

In his address, Lekota stressed that he was not so much concerned about winning the election outright, as he was to obtain a significant percentage of the votes and to form a coalition with other parties to prevent the ANC from obtaining an absolute majority.

The best outcome for South Africa is to have a coalition government in place to root out the evil of corruption, he said. He added that the ANC could under no circumstances be part of such a coalition. “Cope will never form a coalition with the ANC”, Lekota said.

He mentioned the example of Zimbabwe. “Today the Zim dollar is worth nothing. Money is a receipt to indicate that you are entitled to certain goods in that country, but there is nothing to get in that country. The rand still represents something but it is also going down the route where if we don’t stop this thing, one day it will be worth nothing” he said.



He said that the deterioration in South Africa needed to be addressed before it progressed. “The reason parties of liberation failed their countries is because when they get to the point of freedom, they fail to understand that transition”. “And so, instead of responding to the new challenges, they become preoccupied with rewarding the loyalties of yesteryear”.

“At the point when the masses – men and women who are supporting them are expecting better services... no, they want to reward the past”.

Citing Zimbabwe as an example of this, Lekota described how President Mugabe took commercial farms and gave them to “veterans of the struggle”. “It escaped his mind, whether they know how to run a commercial farm or not”. “As a result of Mugabe’s actions, the Zimbabwean dollar is worth nothing today”, he said.

The leader of COPE said to arrest the deterioration, South Africans must vote for a party who would change the electoral system.

“If you really want to arrest that... the fundamental, the one issue I think South Africans must focus on is that we must go to this election and vote for an organisation that wants the electoral system changed”, he said.

“Fifteen years on, political parties appoint people not on the basis of whether they have the necessary skills, the know-how, the reliability. They are appointed on the basis of who is loyal to them and whose friends they are and who may be their brothers and sisters”.

Lekota said political power had to be returned to the people so they could decide who to appoint as public representatives. We want to put political power into the hands of the people so they can decide who will be either the mayor or leaders of cities or towns. They must be the ones to decide that.



From left: SwissCham President Jürg A. Schalch, Swiss Ambassador to South Africa, Rudolf Bärffuss, President of COPE (Congress of the People), Mosiuoa Lekota, SwissCham Vice-President Thomas Hippele.



Mosiuo Lekota, who made a great effort to be present and speak despite having a bad bout of influenza and almost not able to come, still took his time to answer a few questions in quite some detail. SwissCham President, Jürg A. Schalch then thanked Mosiuo Lekota and the guests for coming. The event ended with delicious cocktail fare before the rain came down in buckets.