

Minister Motsoaledi and MEC Dhlomo pleased with the functioning of the condom factory at Dube TradePort

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National Health minister Dr Aaron Motsoaledi and KZN Health MEC Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo have expressed their satisfaction with operations at the condom factory situated at Dube TradePort, near the King Shaka International Airport. Following the conclusion of the TB Conference in Durban, MEC Dhlomo on Friday (15 June 2018) accompanied Minister Motsoaledi to the condom manufacturing plant, which is a joint venture between SA Health Protection Services and US based company HBM, who have formed HBM-SA. The facility produces 700 000 condoms per day for the local and export markets, and is expected to double its output soon, as it continues to build capacity. Among the HBM-SA production line is the government's Max condoms, which replaced the Choice brand.

The new R 150 million factory is regarded as a coup for KwaZulu-Natal as it will create up to 150 local jobs in its first development phase. Previously, SA Health imported all its stock from a manufacturer in China. However, once government instituted the Special Economic Zone incentives programme, the company decided to locate their production within Dube TradePort's Special Economic Zone. This proves yet again that such zones are an effective means to drive investment in local manufacturing and exports.

MEC Dhlomo says Minister Motsoaledi is pleased with what he saw and is looking forward to coming back for the official launch of the facility, which is expected soon. *"The Minister was impressed to see that this factory has the capacity to produce 1,4 million condoms per day. We are looking forward to coming back with the minister for the formal launch of this HBM-SA condom factory."*

"This company has already started employing locally, and has 35 staff members and will go up to 150 breadwinners. If you multiply that by five, it will contribute to our economy, and in terms of money in the pockets of some of our citizens in KZN. "Here in KZN, we have reaped the most rewards through this factory, because there will not be a shortage of condoms in KZN. Also, when the condom distribution programme is extended to SADC countries, it becomes very easy for them to be transported, because the airport is right next door."

Condoms are still regarded as one of the safest measures to prevent the spread of sexually-transmitted diseases and unwanted pregnancies. Statistics show that in South Africa, women and girls aged 15 – 24 are at highest risk of contracting HIV; while unplanned pregnancies contribute significantly to the high drop-out rate at high schools and institutions of tertiary education.

MEC Dhlomo says Government is continuing to promote Dual Protection as a strategy to curb unwanted pregnancies and sexually-transmitted infections such as HIV and others. Dual Protection entails men and boys undergoing Medical Male Circumcision; using condoms during every episode of sexual contact; and all of this coupled with female contraceptive methods.



Minister

Motsoaledi, MEC Dhlomo and Sibusiso Lushaba, of HBM-SA

