

Press Statement: For immediate release

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### **CONSTRUCTION SECTOR WELCOMES EASING OF LOCKDOWN UNDER LEVEL 3**

The construction industry welcomes President Cyril Ramaphosa's announcement of the country moving to Level 3 as from 01 June 2020. The sector has been calling for an immediate re-activation of live construction sites that were at various stages of completion when the lockdown came into effect on the 27<sup>th</sup> of March 2020.

Chairperson of the Construction Covid-19 Rapid Response Task Team, Mr John Matthews acknowledged that the easing of lockdown meant that a lot of construction companies on the verge of collapse could be saved. *'We are optimistic that allowing the construction sector to resume full operations will salvage what is left of the sector. We are pleased that the government gave consideration to the concerns we raised and agreed to a full re-activation of the sector under Level 3. Continued restraints on construction activity was leading us towards a situation where there was little hope of a recovery for a lot of companies in the industry'* said Matthews.

On measures to contain the spread of the Coronavirus disease on construction sites, he added that there was a need for companies to adhere to the strict health and safety protocols that were already in place, for protection of employees. He highlighted the need for self-regulation by all employers in the industry, emphasizing the call by President Ramaphosa that combating the spread of the disease was in the hands of everyone.

*'It is not up to the government to try and monitor every office and construction site, but each and every employer has a responsibility to ensure that the health and safety of employees is guaranteed. The industry has health and safety protocols already in place and any employer in the sector who needs assistance should contact their Association for guidance and support'* said Matthews.

He also added that the Task Team would pursue efforts for the creation of a Construction Relief Fund, to assist the sector with additional PPE requirements. He confirmed that the Team activities would continue beyond the resumption of construction activity, as it was crucial to provide on-going support to employers in the industry and continued engagement with the government in pursuit of long-term sector recovery.

The construction industry was already under siege prior to the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent nation-wide lockdown. However, it has been touted as one of the sectors that the government should

prioritise to increase work opportunities and revive the South African economy due to it being one of the major economic contributors and because of the labour-intensive nature of construction activities.

The Construction COVID-19 Rapid Response Task Team (“CC19RRTT”) is an industry grouping that was convened to charter a recovery plan for the construction sector. It incorporates the entire construction value chain covering suppliers, manufacturers, property developers, built environment professionals and contractors (main contractors and subcontractors).

Participating organisations include:

Master Builders South Africa (MBSA), The Association of South African Quantity Surveyors (ASAQS), Western Cape Property Development Forum (WCPDF), South African Institute of Architects (SAIA), Black Business Council in the Built Environment (BBCBE), Consulting Engineers South Africa (CESA), Association of Construction Project Managers (ACPM), The South African Institution of Civil Engineering (SAICE), South African Black Technical and Allied Careers Organisation (SABTACO), South African Women in Construction and Built Environment (SAWIC & BE), The Concrete Institute of South Africa (TCI), Cox Yeats Attorneys, South African Geomatics Institute (SAGI) , National Construction Incubator (NCI), Institute for Landscape Architecture in South Africa (ILASA), Construction Management Foundation (CMF), Association of Construction Health and Safety Management (ACHASM), Association of Architectural Aluminium Manufacturers of South Africa (AAAMSA), The Federated Employers Mutual Assurance Company (FEM), Concrete Manufacturers Association (CMA) , ASPASA, Clay Brick Association of South Africa, South African Institute of Black Property Practitioners (SAIBPP), Council for the Built Environment (CBE) , National Spa & Pool Institute of Southern Africa (NSPI), South African Property Owners Association (SAPOA), South African Affordable Residential Developers Association, (SAARDA), South African Association of Consulting Professional Planners (SAACPP), Southern African Plastic Pipe Manufacturers Association (SAPPMA), Chartered Institute of Building (CIOB), South African Green Industry Council (SAGIC) , South African Paint Manufacturing Association (SAPMA), Builders Warehouse (Suppliers and Manufacturing), and Master Builders KwaZulu-Natal (MBA KZN) as the Convener.

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