

## MEDIA STATEMENT

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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#### KZN EDTEA AND MWANGA AFRIKA CABLES CELEBRATE GRADUATION OF 47 YOUNG PARTICIPANTS FROM PIONEERING CABLE MANUFACTURING LEARNERSHIP PROGRAMME

The KwaZulu-Natal Department of Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs (EDTEA), in partnership with Mwanga Afrika Cables, will on Tuesday, 02 December 2025, host a Graduation Ceremony celebrating 47 young graduates who have successfully completed the inaugural Mwanga Afrika Cables 18-month flagship Learnership Programme in Power and Telecommunication Cable Manufacturing.

Designed to equip young South Africans with critical technical and theoretical competencies, the programme enrolled participants from across KwaZulu-Natal. It delivered a comprehensive blend of practical manufacturing experience, workplace readiness, and personal development.

With an exceptional 94% retention rate, all 47 learners successfully completed the required assessments and have been duly moderated and approved by the Manufacturing, Engineering and Related Services Sector Education and Training Authority (merSETA). The projected certification success rate stands at an impressive 90–95%. Graduates will be awarded their National Qualifications Framework (NQF) Level 4 Certificates at the ceremony, signifying their readiness to contribute meaningfully to the workforce.

The programme successfully achieved its core objectives, including imparting proficiency in power and telecommunications cable manufacturing, strengthening understanding of workplace safety and compliance standards, deepening knowledge in quality control systems and production workflows, and significantly enhancing employability and technical confidence.

“This event is not just a graduation ceremony, it is a transformative milestone for youth empowerment and industrial skills development in KwaZulu-Natal. Many of the graduates come from indigent communities, and this programme has not only changed their lives but has the potential to uplift their families and communities,” said Professor Ndawonde, Executive Director of Mwanga Afrika Cables.

Professor Ndawonde expressed heartfelt appreciation to the KwaZulu-Natal government, in particular EDTEA, for its unwavering support. “We are deeply thankful to EDTEA, under the leadership of Honourable MEC Zondi, for believing in this vision. This partnership is a testament to what can be achieved when government and industry collaborate for a better South Africa.

Together, we are creating jobs, empowering youth, and building the foundation for sustainable industrial growth,” he added.

MEC for Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs, Rev. Musa Zondi, highlighted the strategic importance of skills development to KwaZulu-Natal’s economic trajectory.

“As a province, KZN is positioning itself as a manufacturing and industrial hub. These skills support our re-industrialisation agenda under the Provincial Growth and Development Strategy and the Economic Reconstruction and Recovery initiatives. This learnership programme is therefore more than capacity-building; it is a strategic investment in economic competitiveness, industrial resilience, and youth inclusion,” said MEC Zondi.

Mwanga Afrika Cables remains committed to continuing the Learnership Programme as part of its long-term strategy to build operational and human capital capacity for its upcoming state-of-the-art manufacturing facility planned within the Dube TradePort Industrial Economic Zone (IDZ) in 2028. In partnership with South Oceans Electric Wire Company, more than R1 billion will be invested in the new facility, which will specialise in the production of Medium Voltage (MV) and High Voltage (HV) cables. The facility is expected to employ over 300 permanent staff, create more than 600 indirect jobs, and serve as a hub for industrial innovation and youth development.

With close to 1,000 applications received for the inaugural intake, the learnership programme has underscored a deep desire among South African youth for meaningful opportunities to improve their livelihoods and contribute to the economy.

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