

**REMARKS BY THE MEC FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TOURISM AND
ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS, REV. MUSA ZONDI**

INSIMBI RIDGE CATALYTIC PROJECT LAUNCH

10 NOVEMBER 2025

CATO RIDGE

Programme Director;

The Honourable Premier of KwaZulu-Natal, Mr. Thamsanqa Ntuli;

Mayor of eThekweni, Councillor Cyril Xaba;

Inkosi Mlaba of AmaXimba;

Insimbi Ridge Executives;

Executives from Assore SA, the Rail Development Corporation, and The Logistics Group;

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and gentlemen, Good morning!

It gives me great pleasure to join you at this significant moment - the official launch and sod turning of the Insimbi Ridge Logistics Precinct.

This gathering comes at a most fitting time - only weeks after KwaZulu-Natal hosted the 2025 Provincial Investment Conference, where we secured over R100 billion in pledges across strategic sectors. Among those pledges was the Insimbi Ridge development - a shining example of what becomes possible when government and business move in partnership to unlock our province's full economic potential.

Driving Inclusive, Sustainable Growth

The Insimbi Ridge Precinct represents much more than an infrastructure project.

It is a statement of intent - that KwaZulu-Natal is serious about modernising its freight system, decongesting our ports, and creating a logistics network that works for business, for workers, and for communities.

Located strategically along the Durban–Gauteng corridor, Insimbi Ridge is one of South Africa's first large-scale, privately funded freight and logistics developments. And this demonstrates that the private sector stands ready to invest, and that our government is equally ready to create an environment where such investment thrives.

This catalytic project aligns perfectly with our KwaZulu-Natal Investment Strategy 2030 and our commitment under Strategic Integrated Project 2 (SIP 2) to modernise freight infrastructure. It also complements the R90 billion Port of Durban expansion, ensuring that KZN continues to be the gateway to South Africa and to the continent.

Re-Industrialisation and Job Creation

When we speak of revitalising KZN's economy, this is precisely what we mean.

Here, at Cato Ridge, we see re-industrialisation made real - the transformation of former industrial land into a dynamic, multimodal logistics hub.

Over its lifespan, the Insimbi Ridge Precinct will attract billions in private capital and create up to 10,000 jobs across construction, logistics, and manufacturing.

Importantly, the project prioritises local labour and small business participation, ensuring that communities in the KwaXimba Traditional Council directly benefit from this development.

This is inclusive growth in action, development that uplifts rather than displaces, and that restores confidence in our shared ability to rebuild this province from the ground up.

Public–Private Partnership and Sustainability

We must commend Assore SA PropCo, the Rail Development Corporation, and partners such as FPT Group for taking this bold step. You are proving that public–private collaboration is not a concept, but it is a working model for progress.

We are equally encouraged by the project's strong environmental governance — with all required Environmental Authorisations, Water Use Licences, and Offset Plans in place.

The rehabilitation of the former Cato Ridge Works site is a powerful example of responsible redevelopment — turning a legacy industrial area into a productive logistics hub without burdening our environment or the fiscus.

Conclusion: A Symbol of Confidence

Ladies and gentlemen, every container that moves more efficiently through this corridor is not just cargo, but it is confidence. It is trust regained in KwaZulu-Natal's capacity to deliver.

The Insimbi Ridge Catalytic Project sends a clear message:

That KwaZulu-Natal is open for business.

That we are building with purpose.

And that partnerships grounded in integrity and innovation will continue to define our path forward.

On behalf of the KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Government and the Department of Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs, I extend heartfelt congratulations to the project partners, and gratitude for your belief in this province.

May this sod-turning mark not just the start of construction, but the beginning of a new era of logistics excellence, industrial renewal, and shared prosperity.

Thank you.