

## Motlanthe ends Finland visit

PRETORIA: Deputy President Kgalema Motlanthe has concluded his visit to Finland with a pledge to partner with the country in the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and marine industries.

The two countries also agreed to cooperate in areas of water treatment and management and vocational training.

Motlanthe indicated that Finland would be a reliable partner in these areas as Finland was at the cutting edge when it came to technology and South Africa could learn a lot from it in this regard.

He said South Africa had a considerable number of youth who needed vocational training and Finland had perfected its systems in these areas.

The deputy president also described South Africa as a water scarce country that could learn from Finland in the areas of water treatment and preservation, hence the agreement to partner in this area, the Presidency said.

Motlanthe was in Finland at the invitation of Prime Minister Jyrki Katainen. The visit was aimed at reinvigorating the political and economic relations between the two countries in order to advance South Africa's national priorities.

While in Finland, the deputy president paid a courtesy call on President Sauli Niinistö and had official talks with the Prime Minister. He also met with business representatives.

The deputy president delivered a lecture at the University of Finland under the theme "Enhancing Africa's Development through Regional and Continental Integration" where he emphasised the need for political and economic integration in African countries.

He said individually the 54 African states were small by global standards and that the potential to attract the necessary Foreign Direct Investment lay in regional integration.

In this regard, he called for strengthened competitiveness in African economies in a range of industries.

"Deeper integration would enable Africa not only to achieve sustained and robust economic growth, but also ensure poverty alleviation, enhanced movement of goods, services, capital and labour, socio-economic policy coordination and harmonization, infrastructure development as well as the promotion of peace and security within and between the regions.

Motlanthe was accompanied by Science and Technology Minister Naledi Pandor and Water and Environmental Affairs Minister Edna Molewa as well as senior government officials.