

MMI looks forward to the SONA 2013

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The President of South Africa is due to give the State of the Nation Address on Thursday 14 February 2013, below are some of the issues Nicolaas Kruger, Group CEO, MMI Holdings is looking forward to hearing more about.

More clarity about the implementation framework of the National Development Plan (NDP)

We are very encouraged by the ANC's declaration at its Mangaung national conference, in terms of which it embraced Vision 2030 and the NDP as a platform for united action by all South Africans to address poverty, unemployment and inequality. Business is eager to play its part in advancing economic wellbeing for all, and more clarity about the implementation framework of the NDP is important.

Further opportunities for business and government to partner

We believe there is great value in public/private partnerships in the South African context. Identification of such opportunities and thoughts about how they could be advanced would be welcomed.

An increased focus on improving savings levels in South Africa

Compared to global counterparts, South Africa has a very low personal savings level. A higher level of savings would be

beneficial for our nation and specific measures to encourage and increase savings in South Africa are important.

More detail on the planned National Health Insurance Scheme
Government has placed quality healthcare for all South Africans high on its priority list. We fully support this prioritisation and more detail in respect of the planned National Health Insurance (NHI) Scheme would assist the various players and stakeholders in the health industry to start planning and accelerate achievement of government's goal. It is a good example of an objective shared by government and business, and where public/private partnerships can be very valuable.

Further clarity about the impact of social security and retirement reforms on future pensioners and taxpayers

During 2012 National Treasury made good progress in clarifying many aspects of retirement reforms. As for NHI, we are in full support of reforms that will result in a more effective social safety net and better retirement provision. Further clarity about social security reforms (including its close link to retirement reforms) and the impact of all the reforms on its intended beneficiaries, as well as on taxpayers, would accelerate the achievement of government's goals. It is also crucial to give due consideration to the significant role that unemployment plays in relation to the reforms.

Progress with infrastructure development

One of the unique components of the Financial Sector Charter is the value financial services institutions can add by investing in transformational infrastructure projects, which would also contribute

towards the creation of much needed jobs. The availability of more of these type of opportunities would be positive.

More focus on education

We expect that education, alongside spending on health, infrastructure and the prevention of crime will be addressed in the budget. In addition to an increased focus on improving education in general, it is also important to focus on niche areas like an improvement in financial literacy, which will empower individuals to provide better for retirement, protect their families against unforeseen events and save more.