



MEDIA STATEMENT
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

JULY 12, 2023

**6TH ANNUAL BIO AFRICA CONVENTION OFFICIALLY LAUNCHED AS FOOD SECURITY
AND INNOVATION SET TO TOP THE AGENDA.**

The 6th annual BIO Africa Convention has been launched as food security, sustainability and biotech innovation is set to take centre stage.

The theme for the BIO Africa Convention, 2023 is Re-Imagining Biotechnology Innovation for Africa's Development and Security.

The convention takes place in KwaZulu Natal as the province prepares to welcome both locally and international renowned scientists to the prestigious event.

Announcing the launch in Pretoria earlier this week, Executive Vice President of BIO Africa and Strategic Partnerships, Dr. Siyabulela Ntutela says this year's convention will tackle critical issues, including vaccine manufacturing, using biotechnology to address the issue of food security and access to medicine.

"We are excited to announce that there will be a 'Start-up Stadium' and we have invited SMMEs that will showcase their innovation to a panel of judges at the pre-convention," added Dr Ntutela.

The convention is Pan African, with many partners throughout the continent, including Villgro Africa (East Africa), and others such as Advancing Healthcare Innovation in Africa (AHIA) and the International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (ICGEB). Its main champion from the onset has been the Department of Science and Innovation (DSI).

DG in the department of Science and Innovation, Dr Phil Mjwara says it's important to support the BIO Africa Convention "We have a responsibility to invest in new technologies and science capabilities, but also to look at the potential of the continent." He added that all stakeholders must get involved "We are liaising with the department of agriculture, labour reform and rural development as we begin to look at biotech to modernise the agricultural sector. We will showcase that at the convention."

The BIO Africa Convention is supported by industry experts – who were also in attendance at the official launch.



They included:

Dr. Boitumelo Semete: CEO of SAHPRA

Dr. George Painter: Director: Emory Institute of Drug Development (Emory University)

Dr. Giorgio Roscigno: Chairperson: Next2people

Dr. Chris Smith: Cambridge University (The Naked Scientist)

Dr Vuyisile Phehane : Executive: Bio-Economy (TIA)

Registration for the BIO Africa Convention is now open www.bioafricaconvention.com.

Members of the media are welcome to make contact with us, should they require interviews with any of the above panellists. Bios and CVs available on request.

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