**DIRECTOR-GENERAL’S BRIEFING NOTES FOR THE PRESS LAUNCH**

**15th CEE ANNUAL REPORT AND 2014 EE PUBLIC REGISTER**

Acting Chairperson for Commission for Employment Equity

Commissioners from Commission for Employment Equity

Deputy Directors-General

Members of the media

Ladies and gentlemen

Good morning to you all!

It is with great pleasure that I accept the 15th CEE Annual Report from the Commission for Employment Equity (CEE) and the 2014 Employment Equity Public Register covering the 2014/2015 reporting period.

Ladies and gentlemen I am pleased not only to launch the 15th CEE Annual report, but to launch the 2014 Employment Equity Public Register for the same period as well. The analysis and information contained in the CEE Annual Report is due to successful reporting by employers contained in the Public Register. Between 2012 and 2014, there has been an increase of **10.4%** in the number of employment equity reports received by the Employment Equity Registry.

This makes me wonder whether the amendments in the Act is already working because the increase is great despite, **865** previously designated employers having de-registered from the reporting obligations due to not being designated any longer as their annual turnover fell below the stipulated turnover threshold in Schedule 4 of the Act.

In our endeavour to enforce the amendments to the Employment Equity Act, my Department is at an advanced stage of referring designated employers who failed to meet their reporting obligations to the Labour Court. The first batch of 77 designated employers who failed to submit reports are in the process of being referred to the Labour Court for a fine according to Schedule 1 of the Employment Equity Act. This will be followed by the rest of the approximately 1 400 designated employers identified from the Employment Equity System as having failed to report.

This year’s report comes at a crucial time in the history of this country, as this year marks 60 years since the adoption of the Freedom Charter. Government has been hard at work for South African society to realise those ideals that majority of the citizens fought for as contained in the Freedom Charter.

Equality, particularly the “***equal pay for work of equal value***”, a key principle in the Freedom charter has now been explicitly provided for in the Act and the criteria and methodology is outlined in the Employment Equity Regulations of 2014 to assist employers to implement the pay equity concept.

May I also remind you all that South Africa’s democracy has come of age as it marks 21 years of its democracy. However, it is a pity that as we celebrate the 60 years of the Freedom Charter, we have not reached the same level of maturity with employment equity and diversity as we have done with our democratic revolution in our country to rid ourselves of Apartheid in order to transform our South African labour market to address the triple challenges of inequalities, poverty and unemployment.

Although the majority of our Black people, women and persons with disabilities were in the forefront in the struggle against Apartheid, 21 years later, these groups of our population still continue to struggle.

Ladies and gentlemen, the 15th CEE Annual Report does not paint a good picture on transformation in our workplaces and in the country in general, whether from a sector point of view or from a provincial point of view.

The past reports have continued to lament the speed at which transformation is taking place in our workplaces and the same message cannot be repeated from year-to-year.

While there are a number of reasons to commend Government, State-Owned Companies and some private sector employers for their transformation efforts, the private sector on the whole should make serious attempts to come, participate and enjoy the party as well.

Transformation should not only be about making crosses in the right places, but should also be about real change that is barrier free and without impediments and bottlenecks.

Looking just at the Top and Senior Management levels over the years, does seem as though we are sitting with the ‘Old Boys Choir’ that are repeatedly singing the same songs.

Ladies and gentlemen, if we want to change the song then we must change the choir by including members that are women and persons with disabilities, in particular, at these strategic decision-making levels in our organisations.

We need not only walk the talk, but we need to talk about the walk so that we deal with all areas of transformation by discussing issues faced by the designated groups, i.e. black people, women and persons with disabilities in the exercise of their duties.

Ladies and gentlemen, we cannot continue with segregated workplaces that are not diversified where certain members of society are either confined to higher or lower levels purely based on their gender, disability or the colour of their skin.

Time is now to tackle the structural remnants of apartheid, where Whites and males dominate at the top and Blacks, women and persons with disabilities dominate at the bottom.

The sad thing is that a number of these employers in the private sector are benefiting and are sustained from huge government contracts but continue to perpetuate segregation and discrimination on majority of the Country’s people.

Embracing diversity is only not a moral issue or only about doing things right, but it is equally about doing the right thing to the benefit of employers’ businesses and also about the communities they operate in.

Ladies and Gentlemen, ‘***Employment equity and transformation makes business sense’***.

**I thank you!**