

Nedlac hosts job summit colloquium

On the 9th and 10th of July Nedlac hosted a colloquium as part of the preparation for the jobs summit planned for September this year. As per last week's article, the social partners at Nedlac have been requested to participate in working groups that will formulate proposals to stimulate growth and job creation in the economy as well as identify the key constraints hampering the economy. The rationale behind the colloquium was to afford academics, NGOs and other stakeholders who don't have representation at Nedlac the opportunity to provide inputs and make presentations for consideration.

The views expressed at the colloquium by the various parties were divergent to say the least. Throughout the two days there were various private sector and public sector projects presented, but the most contentious presentations were those that dealt with macro-economic policy, the Fourth Industrial Revolution, the future of the agro-food sector in South Africa as well as re-engineering the social security system in South Africa. As far as the agro-food sector was concerned, there were encouraging suggestions on how to unblock the legal and administrative burdens holding the sector back, especially in relation to the export of high-value commodities such as fruits and nuts. On the other end of the spectrum, there were presentations calling for a more comprehensive social security system which includes jobseeker grants to be introduced. The latter proposal raised questions regarding the affordability of such proposals within the current fiscal environment.

For all intents and purposes the colloquium served as an information session for social partners, who will now be tasked with analysing and debating the proposals at Nedlac. In addition, social partners will be able to make their own recommendations and proposals in the coming weeks in the build-up to the jobs summit.