THE CHAIRPERSON OF SITA, MR ZUKILE NOMVETE OPENING ADDRESS AND WELCOMES GUESTS ON THE OCCASION OF THE INDUSTRY DAY ORGANIZED AND HOSTED BY THE AGENCY (WEDNESDAY 08 MARCH 2017 **VENUE:** VELMORE HOTEL, CENTURION**)**

Thank you Programme Director:

- To the DG of Telecommunications and Postal Services, Mr Robert Nkuna, thank you for gracing us with your presence. We are honoured to have you in our midst
- The Chief Executive Officer of the State Information Technology Agency, Dr Setumo Mohapi
- Members of the SITA Board of Directors present here today
- The SITA Executive Management
- Representatives from our valued customers in government and the industry, we welcome you to our Cloud Industry Day engagement

Good morning ladies and gentlemen

I am so pleased to see such a good response to our call – to join us over the next two days to deliberate, engage on this critical initiative that we want to expedite in the shortest possible time – of course following all the required prescripts - to make it a reality.

Today is part of State Information Technology Agency's on-going journey of rolling out a series of initiatives and interventions that are aimed at improving the way we service our client – the citizenry as represented by Government. Our endeavours range from the modernisation of our infrastructure to realising our long standing commitment of leveraging on economies of scale and in that way make a saving on the tax payers monies. All these objectives are entrenched in our SITA Annual Performance Plan (APP) and our approved Strategy document that we are held to account upon.

This specific engagement process that we are embarking on today is a part of our commitment that we made as SITA to engage with all our stakeholders using various vehicles to ensure that there is a better understanding and appreciation of our mandate, our reasons for existence, and in that way are able to respond better, more effectively and speedily to our business imperatives.

Some of you will remember that we started this consultative process with my Executive team last year when we went around the country meeting with OEMs, service providers, vendors and resellers, wherein we assured you that we would meet with you regularly to keep you abreast with developments in our organisation. This is to ensure we empower you where we can as we also stand to benefit immensely from you when you have a better understanding of our business.

Today we are here to engage with you specifically on the **cloud-based service for all Government departments** which SITA wants to roll out in the near future.

 As it is clearly stated in the National Development Plan 2030 that developments in ICT will continue to transform economic and social activities and on how individuals and communities communicate and function. The Fourth Industrial Revolution is indeed upon us.

This engagement, which is structured under the central theme of "Modernising Government IT" for agility, flexibility and cost effectiveness, will in turn ensure that through Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) there is modernisation of society, advancement of equitable access for all, as well as research and innovations that are reinventing government in the digital age.

The session is designed to stimulate and generate discussions among key stakeholders, who include the Government, Cloud Infrastructures and Software Manufactures as well as cloud operators. The main focus will be on relevant strategic approach to build cloud infrastructure for Government; operational considerations; policy aspects of Government cloud; regulatory impact including human and financial resources that should be applied to enable this capability.

This transformation journey will put us in a position to ensure the establishment of the Government Cloud Platform which is pivotal in delivering easily accessible cross-dependants solution to all Government departments and enabling digital capability to the citizens.

SITA views itself as a strategic partner to Government and the cloud transformation will deliver value that will result in improved service delivery to citizens.

The intended move to cloud computing might seem like a mammoth task, given the complexities associated with bringing this dream to life; however, we certainly have no other option. We can't afford to be left behind as there is great evidence that corroborates the fact that major technological advancements demonstrate a shift towards cloud-based services.

Saving tax payers money is also very critical to SITA and its clients and bearing in mind that cloud technology means there are no added expenses for hardware, software licenses and certification processes it makes perfect sense for Government to get ready for it and take full advantage of its benefits.

The case in point which I believe most of you heard is when the Minister of Finance, Honourable Pravin Gordhan in his budget speech last month informed the nation on how the Government will approach its spending priorities considering the limited funds available for government to meet its obligations to. The Minister singled out SITA for our collaboration with National Treasury to realise savings of R2.5 billion over the next three years in large ICT contracts.

This is just but one of the initiatives already in place, however there are many more to follow, with the cloud computing being one of them. It is no wonder that public, private and hybrid cloud implementations is expected to accelerate in 2017 as leaders take advantage of the cloud's economies of scale to build core applications, providing a cost effective vehicle for the modernisation of our infrastructure.

Experts project that by 2018, 59% of all of the cloud's workload will be the result of Software-as-a-Service. This represents a 41% increase since 2013.

To achieve this significant task SITA has decided to engage and collaborate with you the industry to share some ideas on building this capability. This engagement will assist SITA to develop efficient cloud solutions that will assist Government to consolidate all ICT Infrastructure into a unified common platform.

We believe during this time you will contribute immensely in advancing SITA's mission to serve as the national cloud service provider for the South African Government Departments.

I am a person who always encourages open talks and being frank when dealing with important issues especially when deliberating on tasks that affect our clients and have an impact on service delivery. We don't want to find ourselves in a position where departments not in the Cloud are left out of the loop, a situation that must never be allowed to happen.

We need to hopefully walk away from our deliberations with concrete advices, ideas and insights that will work for all of us. Let's engage to bring this dream to life.

Thank you ladies and gentlemen for you kind attention