

MEDIA RELEASE

17 July 2026

Gauteng has officially set the benchmark for Industrial Excellence in South Africa after the OR Tambo SEZ and Tshwane Automotive SEZ emerged among the country's top performers at the 2026 SEZs Achievement Awards,

Gauteng has reaffirmed its position as South Africa's industrial and investment powerhouse after two of its flagship Special Economic Zones (SEZs) emerged among the country's top performers at the inaugural SEZs Achievement Awards, held during the Presidential Gala Dinner at the 2nd International Special Economic Zones Infrastructure and Investment Conference in Durban.

The OR Tambo Special Economic Zone was named the Most Improved SEZ Operator, while the Tshwane Automotive Special Economic Zone (TASEZ) received the Best Newcomer Award, recognising its remarkable progress since its operational launch.

The awards, presented at a special gala event on 16 July 2026, attended virtually by President Cyril Ramaphosa, celebrate excellence across South Africa's SEZ programme, recognising leadership, governance, investment promotion, innovation, export growth, job creation, small, medium, and micro enterprise (SMME) integration and sustainable industrial development.

According to remarks made at the SEZ Conference by Minister of Trade, Industry and Competition, Parks Tau, South Africa's 13 SEZs have collectively attracted R34-billion in investment from 224 companies and created more than 28 000 direct jobs, underscoring their growing contribution to the country's industrialisation agenda.

The double recognition is a significant endorsement of Gauteng's role as the country's premier destination for manufacturing, logistics, automotive production, aerospace and advanced industrial investment.

Gauteng's industrial excellence recognised

Gauteng MEC for Economic Development, Agriculture and Rural Development, Vuyiswa Ramokgopa congratulated both SEZs, saying the awards demonstrate the province's commitment to building an inclusive, resilient and globally competitive economy.

"Tonight's recognition of both the OR Tambo Special Economic Zone and the Tshwane Automotive Special Economic Zone is a proud moment for Gauteng and for every person who has contributed to building these world-class industrial hubs. Winning two national SEZ Awards confirms that Gauteng is home to some of South Africa's most dynamic and high-performing SEZs."

"These awards affirm that our investment in industrial infrastructure, innovation, partnerships and skills development is delivering tangible results. As the Gauteng Provincial Government, we remain committed to supporting SEZs as catalysts for investment, job creation, localisation and economic transformation."

Ramogkopa congratulated the leadership, staff, investors and partners of both OR Tambo SEZ and TASEZ on this outstanding achievement and encouraged them to continue setting the benchmark for industrial excellence across the continent.

"Having two of our SEZs recognised on a national stage confirms that Gauteng continues to lead South Africa's industrial development. These awards belong not only to OR Tambo SEZ and TASEZ, but to every public and private sector partner who continues to invest in building a globally competitive provincial economy," said Ramokgopa.

The recognition demonstrates that when government, industry and investors work together, we can create industrial ecosystems that generate jobs, attract investment and position South Africa for long-term economic growth.

TASEZ: A newcomer delivering national impact

Receiving the Best Newcomer Award, TASEZ has rapidly established itself as one of South Africa's most dynamic industrial developments.

Built to support automotive manufacturing and localisation, the SEZ has already become home to world-class manufacturing facilities while creating thousands of construction and permanent jobs, expanding supplier development opportunities and strengthening South Africa's automotive value chain.

TASEZ acting CEO Andile Sangweni said the recognition validates the vision behind the development.

"To be recognised as South Africa's Best Newcomer SEZ is a tremendous honour. It reflects the dedication of our team, our shareholders, investors and partners who believed in the vision of creating Africa's premier automotive manufacturing hub."

"This award belongs to every worker, contractor, supplier and community member who has contributed to building TASEZ. It also strengthens our resolve to continue driving localisation, industrial innovation, skills development and inclusive economic growth."

OR Tambo SEZ sets the benchmark

The Most Improved SEZ Operator Award recognises the OR Tambo SEZ's sustained excellence in governance, investment facilitation and operational performance.

CEO of the OR Tambo SEZ – officially called the Gauteng Industrial Development Zone (GIDZ) – Thandiwe Ngqobe, welcomed the award as recognition of years of focused work.

"Being named South Africa's Most Improved SEZ Operator is a powerful affirmation of our commitment to operational excellence and investor confidence. It reflects the strength of our partnerships and the professionalism of our team."

"We are proud to contribute to Gauteng's industrial competitiveness and remain committed to supporting advanced manufacturing, high-value exports and sustainable economic development."

The success of both Gauteng SEZs illustrates the province's growing contribution to national industrialisation, demonstrating how strategic infrastructure, effective governance and investor partnerships can deliver measurable economic outcomes.

The awards also reinforce the [World Bank's recent assessment](#) that South Africa possesses the institutional capacity, infrastructure and policy framework to develop globally competitive SEZs capable of driving inclusive economic growth.

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