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CLOTHING INDUSTRY BARGAINING COUNCIL REACHES 14 MILLION FABRIC FACE MASK MANUFACTURING CAPACITY PER WEEK

The National Bargaining Council for the Clothing Manufacturing Industry has, 2 weeks ago, commenced a program to accredit actual clothing manufacturers for fabric face mask production.

This was in response to President Cyril Ramaphosa's recent urgent call for our industry to significantly ramp up fabric face mask manufacturing capacity in South Africa, as an important priority to help combat the spread of COVID-19 in our country.

We are pleased to announce that, as at close of business yesterday, 4 May 2020, the clothing industry bargaining council has accredited a total of 388 manufacturers with a total fabric face mask manufacturing capacity of 13.9 million masks per week.

The majority of these accredited fabric face mask manufacturers are Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME's).

Yesterday alone, our Council's COVID-19 Rapid Response Task Team (COVID-19 RRT) approved a total of 217 Micro Manufacturing Enterprises for Accreditation as Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) & Other Essential Product manufacturers.

These micro enterprises, which are located in all parts of South Africa, employ less than 6 persons each. They are all duly registered with the clothing industry bargaining council, and are mainly located in the township economy.

In terms of our bargaining council's decades old rules, such micro-enterprises are automatically exempted from the provisions of our Main Collective Agreement. This means that they are automatically classified as "compliant" manufacturing companies.

Part of the benefits of our accreditation certification process includes free advertising for such accredited companies, on Proudly South African's recently launched dedicated fabric face mask portal. We are pleased that such unprecedented advertising exposure is now also automatically available to accredited MSME's which are registered with and accredited by our bargaining council.

Our bargaining council has introduced its PPE accreditation process, in order to prevent unethical and unhealthy manufacturing practices in fabric face mask production. We cannot allow that the COVID-19 crisis be exploited for mere profiteering during fabric face mask production.

Accordingly, important parts of our accreditation criteria are that the use of locally produced fabric as well as the face mask manufacturing government guidelines as was issued by the Department of Trade, Industry & Competition (Dtic) MUST be a priority in the production of fabric face masks in our country.

Issued by



**Mrs Marthie Raphael
National Chairperson
National Bargaining Council for the Clothing Manufacturing industry**

If further comment is required, kindly contact the following persons:

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Mr Rajen Naicker, Apparel & Textile Association of South Africa (ATASA) Chairperson, on cell number 082 728 8110

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