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Industry commits to finalising Furniture Industry Master Plan by end-2019

The South African furniture manufacturing industry will soon be guided by an industry master plan, which will focus on the development and support of the local industry.

The Furniture Industry Master Plan (FIMP) will set clear guidelines and targets for the furniture manufacturing industry and guide public sector procurement as part of the government's efforts to support and stimulate the industry.

“At the recent Furniture Sector Forum, the industry agreed to work with the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) to create the Master Plan before the end March 2020. This process will include industry-wide consultation with manufacturers, labour unions, government, raw material suppliers and buyers, ranging from the retail sector to architects, interior designers and property

developers,” says Bernadette Isaacs, Chief Operating Officer of the South Africa Furniture Initiative (SAFI).

Isaacs explains that many large manufacturing industries, including the textile and automotive manufacturing industries, have a master plan that was co-created by the DTI and industry representatives. The furniture manufacturing industry contributes approximately 1% to the country’s gross domestic product and it employs in excess of 26 000 people.

“A Master Plan brings together all the policy instruments and government incentives that are available to a manufacturer and it combines that with clear manufacturing targets and timelines. This in turn creates a stable environment for manufacturers to invest in their plants and equipment and plan for future export contracts.”

SAFI, the DTI and Proudly South African also agreed to combine their resources and initiatives to drive and monitor local government procurement towards South African furniture manufacturers.

“By our estimates, there is between R5 billion and R8 billion available annually, if the retail, corporate, government departments, state-owned enterprises, and institutions such as hospitals, schools and libraries purchase their furniture from South African suppliers.

“We believe that the political will exists, and we will do everything in our power to assist with the facilitation of translating the buy local commitments made by the public and private sector into tangible orders for the local manufacturing industry,” says Isaacs.

More information on SAFI and the furniture industry in South Africa is available at www.furnitureza.org.za



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