



RESPONSIBLE LEADERSHIP SUMMIT

SHAPING OUR FUTURE

Wendy Luhabe calls on participants to live a life that matters

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Wendy Luhabe, Chair of the Industrial Development Corporation of South Africa Ltd & Chancellor of Johannesburg University, closed the first day of the Responsible Leadership Summit with a call for everyone, not just the world's leaders, to be mindful of living a life that matters.

"We often don't believe that what we do makes a contribution to the world, we just view it as a job," she noted.

Observing that the current economic crisis might turn out to be the greatest moment of insight for the human race, Ms Luhabe questioned whether it will change us with respect to what we do, how we work and how we contribute to the greater good.

"There is a moral deficit in the world," she said. "One way to build a moral compass is through common values and a culture where everyone takes responsibility."

She emphasized the need to discard old assumptions about what people can achieve and go back to basic values that have been recognized throughout history – "because values do matter".

As an antidote to the pessimism she experienced at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Ms Luhabe expanded on two concepts. The first was that of responding rather than reacting to circumstances, in order to prevent instinctive actions based on fear and past experiences and rather develop thoughtful solutions. This requires the second concept: living in the realm of possibilities, where people are creative, daring, courageous, pioneering and inspiring. Living in the realm of possibilities applies whether we are working to build a legacy, to teach somebody something or just trying to be honest and truthful.

She believes the most important quality in a responsible leader is to be available.

"This connection brings out the best in leaders and the people they lead and it gives them the possibility to radiate excellence," she said.



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Ms Luhabe quoted Robert F. Kennedy: “Few will have the greatness to bend history itself; but each of us can work to change a small portion of events, and in the total; of all those acts will be written the history of this generation.”

In conclusion, she stated: “All that is being asked of each one of us is to simply be responsible, to exercise responsibility in the realm of possibilities.”