

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEDIA RELEASE

Saturday, 16 January 2021

Liquor traders call on the President to urgently meet with the alcohol industry to end alcohol ban

- Allow for the resumption of alcohol sales with immediate effect, primarily off consumption (takeaways)
- Support for taverns and shebeen permit holders by means of a financial assistance to the value of R20,000 per outlet
- Moratorium on liquor licence fees payable for a period not less than a year

The continued ban on alcohol sales continues to wreak havoc in the sector and looks set to condemn thousands of livelihoods into poverty whilst the future of taverns remains in doubt. The third and current alcohol ban seems to be the surest way yet that a death knell has indeed been pronounced on the tavern sector. We do not see how we can recover or let alone come back from this ban.

As liquor traders we have always supported government's efforts to fighting against the Covid-19 pandemic and continue to do so through our industry funded tavern compliance programme which seeks to educate liquor traders on best practices for complying with Covid-19 regulations and by extension encourage consumers to observe and practice Covid-19 compliance protocols in their communities.

We continue to support and engage in societal issues that bedevil our country through our GBV initiative called Tavern Dialogues on GBV which positions liquor traders as champions in the fight against gender based violence. We highlight this to remedy the narrative that seeks to position liquor traders as being irresponsible and not alive to the realities facing the country. The opposite couldn't be truer.

Convener of the Liquor Traders Formation, Lucky Ntimane says, **“Our call to the President is to immediately convene a meeting with the alcohol industry with a view to unbanning alcohol** and allow normalcy to return so the lives and livelihoods of the liquor traders, their families and the 250,000 workers dependent on the tavern sector can resume. We believe that it is through a collaborative effort with government that innovative ways to support the health sector and our heroes, frontline workers could be found that a balance is struck that will ensure that livelihoods are preserved and lives are saved as move forward as a country.”

“We are equally concerned that the alcohol ban is having a negative impact on the country and further dent its image as an investment destination. The withdrawal of R2,5 billion worth of investment into the country by South African Breweries parent company AB InBev and the announcement by Consol that it is putting on hold R1,5 billion worth of investment has a major implication on the future growth prospects of the alcohol industry and its value chain and even more detrimental to the job preservation and creation agenda espoused by the President. The alcohol industry has already lost an estimated R25 billion and counting due to the 3 bans it had to endure and if status quo remains we are on course to shed record number

of jobs in a sector that has always been known to create and sustain livelihoods – **All 1 million of them.**” Ntimane said.

We fully support efforts undertaken by SAB and the alcohol industry in general to assert their rights to finding a solution that will allow for the resumption of alcohol sales.

We continue to encourage our people to observe all the Covid-19 regulations as it pertains to the wearing of masks that cover both the mouth and nose, washing of hands regularly and sanitizing, and observing social distance protocols. We all have a role to play to ensure that we successfully navigate our way out of this devastating pandemic.

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Lucky Ntimane

Convener: Liquor Trader Formations

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