



# ArcelorMittal South Africa hands over a state-of-the-art school to the community of Mthatha

*“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world”* – Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela

## Mmasabata Mofurutsi

In 2009, ArcelorMittal South Africa entered into a partnership with the Department of Basic Education with the aim of making a significant contribution by providing quality educational facilities in underprivileged areas across South Africa. On Wednesday 17 July 2013 ArcelorMittal South Africa officially handed over the Mandela Park Primary School built in Slovo Park, Mthatha (Eastern Cape) to the Minister of Basic Education, Honourable Angie Motshekga and to the community of Mthatha. This is the second school that has been built by ArcelorMittal South Africa and donated to an underprivileged community as part of the company's corporate social responsibility programme. The first school to be built and donated was Meetse-A Bophelo Primary School in Mamelodi (Pretoria East) which was handed over to the Department of Basic Education in November 2010.

Mandela Park Primary School was originally designed to house 1000 learners. Most of the learners were accommodated in

an old hall, divided into eight classrooms by dilapidated partitions. The remainder of the learners were crammed into three classrooms which were built by the community. It had no waterborne sewage or a reliable water supply. These types of circumstances were not conducive to a proper teaching and learning environment.

“I would like to thank ArcelorMittal South Africa for the wonderful gift they have given us. We are thrilled and privileged to receive this beautiful school and are looking forward to moving into the new classrooms so we can uplift our students and the community. The new grounds are magnificent and we will maintain this school and teach to the highest standards” said Mr Neti, Principal Mandela Park Primary School.

The new school will accommodate 1 200 pupils and is equipped with facilities such as a laboratory, a media centre with a computer room, eight vegetable tunnels, a fully equipped nutrition centre, two sports grounds, an administrative building with meeting rooms, offices for the principal and vice principal, a staff room and a reception area. It was built using ArcelorMittal's



The new state-of-the-art Mandela Park Primary School in Mthatha



The Minister of Basic Education, Honourable Angie Motshekga delivered the keynote address

alternative building technology. This new technology has many environmental advantages as the material can be recycled and is quicker to construct when compared to the normal bricks and mortar construction building methods. Further, the use of innovative Arval steel panels and alternative building technology is in line with the Government's objective to promote energy efficient and alternative cost-saving building methods. The material is also less labour intensive, has low carbon emissions, saves on water, reduces material wastage and is well insulated. During the construction phase of Mandela Park Primary School, which started in the later part of 2011, about 120 local community members were trained on how to use alternative building methods and gained employment opportunities through the project.

“We are pleased to hand this gift to the pupils and community of Mthatha. We are excited to continue the legacy of our former president Nelson Mandela who is firm in his belief that education is a key to future success. Providing quality facilities is a pillar to that success,” said Ms Nonkululeko

Nyembezi-Heita, Chief Executive Officer, ArcelorMittal South Africa.

“ArcelorMittal South Africa is committed to uplifting, empowering and improving the lives of our disadvantaged communities through its education focused projects, some of which include the provision of science centres adjacent to Sebokeng, Newcastle and Saldanha plants. Our core focus is to improve our country's education as part of our goal to cut down on unemployment in our communities and develop literate and innovative societies”, concludes Maggie Mopedi, Manager, Corporate Social Responsibility and External Relations at ArcelorMittal South Africa.



The Honourable Angie Motshekga (Minister of Basic Education) and Nonkululeko Nyembezi-Heita, Chief Executive Officer, ArcelorMittal South Africa presiding at the official opening of the Mandela Park Primary School



Dignitaries at the opening of the Mandela Park Primary School: Chris Murray (Director ArcelorMittal South Africa Board), Angie Motshekga (Minister of Basic Education, Nonkululeko Nyembezi-Heita (Chief Executive Officer, ArcelorMittal South Africa), Felicidad Cristobal (CEO, ArcelorMittal Foundation) and Mpho Makwana (Chairman, ArcelorMittal South Africa Board)



Felicidad Cristobal (CEO, ArcelorMittal Foundation) and Themba Nkosi (General Manager, Corporate Affairs, ArcelorMittal South Africa)