

Minister Mboweni's game-plan under scrutiny in pre-budget discussion

Issued by [Regent Business School](#)

21 Feb 2020

Some of South Africa's finest analytical minds joined Regent Business School*, a member of Honoris United Universities**, in Johannesburg to share their thoughts on how Finance Minister Tito Mboweni plans to weather the socio-economic storm in his Budget Speech to Parliament later this month. With national debt exceeding R3 trillion, state-owned entities in trouble, business and government ethics under scrutiny, rising unemployment, and the economic growth downgrade by the World Bank, experts agree that the Minister faces a herculean task to deliver a well-rounded, impactful budget to soothe consumer, business and investor jitters.



RBS Pre-Budget Discussion 2020 - Johannesburg. From left to right: Vikesh Rampadarath (Associate Director – RBS); Mr Emile du Plessis (Senior Economist - Standard Bank); Mr Ashraf Garda (Media Host, Radio Presenter - SAfm); Ms Samke Mhlongo (Founder and Chief Executive of TNC Wealth Partners); Dr Somadoda Fikeni (Political Analyst); Prof. Ahmed Shaikh (MD - RBS); Dr Martyn Davies (MD of Emerging Markets- Deloitte); Prof. Dhiru Soni (Director: Research & Innovation - RBS)

Speaking during a Davos-style, audience-interactive discussion at the Killarney Country Club on 19 February 2020, the panel, moderated by seasoned media host and talk radio presenter, Ashraf Garda, sparked robust discussions by sharing insights, short- and long-term forecasts and critical analyses of the measures that government needs to implement to band-aid our challenged economy.

The panel comprised one of South Africa's most sought-after political analysts and social commentators: Dr Somadoda Fikeni, Senior Standard Bank economist; Emile du Plessis, Managing Director of Emerging Markets & Africa at Deloitte and Dean of the Deloitte Alchemy School of Management; Dr Martyn Davies; and Founder and Chief Executive of The Next Chapter (TNC) Wealth Partners, Ms Samke Mhlongo.

The experts initiated stimulating dialogue that included the concerning status of state-owned enterprises, particularly Eskom and SAA, the economic impact of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, weak GDP growth, foreign investment, inclusive development, crime, corruption, and poor financial management on the part of government. The analytical and political banter triggered critical engagement with audience members, with non-attendees contributing to the discussion via digital immersive channels.

“As one of the leading Business Schools, REGENT Business School believes in providing multiple platforms that serve as a

conversation catalyst so all stakeholders can start having critical discussions geared towards creating a better South Africa for all,” explains Professor Ahmed Shaikh, Managing Director of Regent Business School. “Our pre-budget panel discussion is heavily aligned to our broader strategy of empowering students for employability and has evolved into one of the most-anticipated highlights in our academic calendar. The aim is to provide transparent spaces for high-calibre participants to spearhead and channel lively debate, and for future decision-makers and thought-leaders to engage with industry specialists and key analytical minds.”

Opinions, forecasts and healthy debate aside, panellists and guests agree that Finance Minister Tito Mboweni faces formidable challenges as he works on the finer details, before formally tabling his Budget in Parliament on 26 February 2020.

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Honoris United Universities is the first pan-African private higher education network committed to preparing and educating the next generation of African leaders and professionals able to impact regionally in a globalised world. Collaborative intelligence, cultural agility and mobile mindsets and skills are at the heart of Honoris’ vision of higher education.

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