

# Unite to grow the economy, FW urges

All South Africans – black and white – must work together towards the economic empowerment of all “truly disadvantaged South Africans, most of whom are black”, former president F W de Klerk has said.

Addressing the Eskom African Business Leaders Forum yesterday, he said the white population could not provide the number of skilled workers, professionals and managers that a growing economy required.

“Inevitably, and quite rapidly, the economy will grow to reflect the population composition as a whole,” he said in an address about challenges facing SA’s democracy in its second decade.

“However, the economy will not grow satisfactorily if we do not appoint and promote people with appropriate skills; if we interfere with the ability of companies to manage their affairs; or if we dilute property rights.”

He said South Africans needed

to talk to one another frankly.

“There is very little frank debate ... minority communities have not been sufficiently consulted with regard to economic and social transformation.”

De Klerk also called for a labour system that established basic minimum standards for all, while allowing flexibility for medium and small businesses.

South Africa needed to improve service delivery to its poorest sectors, he said. – Sapa