

# Growth will come 'if we focus on Africa'

THELMA NGOMA

THE advent of the fourth industrial revolution will not necessarily translate into job losses, experts said at yesterday's Manufacturing Indaba.

Ayanda Mngadi from Manufacturing Circle said interventions will need to be made by both the public and private sectors "if we are to catch up to with global developments and innovations".

"We are under pressure, we need to move on this revolution," she said.

"People must not panic about job losses, it's about making sure we remain open for business as a country."

Mngadi formed part of a robust conversation about taking the manufacturing sector forward despite low economic growth. South Africa's GDP fell by 2.2% in the first quarter of 2018 – with the largest negative contributors being agriculture, mining and manufacturing.

Maluleke also said that manufacturing had taken a knock, declining by 6.4%.

Manufacturing expert Riaz Haffejee from Sumitomo Rubber said SA was still grappling with the previous industrial revolution. "We need to catch up because changes in automation are too important to not implement."

The Department of Trade and Industry's Tebogo Makube said that SA must integrate with the global economy.

"SA is not a low-cost producer. Wage increases are now in double digits so labour is not cheap. SA needs to move forward but not lose people (their jobs).

"Growth will come from our doorstep if we focus on Africa."

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