



**10 September 2024**

## **Media Release: Celebrating Two Decades of Leadership by SAPOA CEO Neil Gopal**

In a moment of heartfelt recognition, the South African Property Owners Association (SAPOA) proudly celebrated the remarkable 20-year leadership of CEO Neil Gopal. Under his visionary guidance, SAPOA has become a cornerstone of the South African property industry, known for its influence in shaping national policy, fostering stakeholder relationships, and advocating for the industry's sustainable growth.

During the SAPOA Annual Convention 2024, a special tribute was paid to Gopal, who was surprised by the celebration of his two decades of service. New SAPOA President Itumeleng Mothibeli, along with past presidents and board members, expressed their profound gratitude for Gopal's enduring dedication and leadership.

### **A Visionary Leader's Impact**

Reflecting on Gopal's exceptional leadership, Mothibeli acknowledged his profound contributions to the industry, saying: "Neil, your leadership has been nothing short of transformative. We, as an industry, deeply appreciate your tireless efforts. Whether rallying government officials or collaborating with industry stakeholders, you have always been the voice of the property sector, guiding us through both challenges and triumphs. We are here today to celebrate not just your work, but your unwavering commitment to SAPOA's mission."

Mothibeli also praised Gopal's ability to build and inspire a small but highly effective team, whose efforts have ensured SAPOA's success.

"Under your leadership, Neil, SAPOA has thrived. Your team, though small, continues to deliver exceptional results. You have fostered an environment where collaboration and innovation drive the organisation's success. The industry stands united in its admiration for the work you have done over the last 20 years," he added.

### **Two Decades of Advocacy and Growth**

Neil Gopal's journey as CEO began in June 2004, succeeding Brian Kirchman, and since then, his leadership has been marked by a relentless commitment to advocating for the South African property sector. Under his stewardship, SAPOA has become a formidable

**SOUTH AFRICAN PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOCIATION NPC t/a SAPOA – REG NO 1966/008959/08**

**Board of Directors:** I Mothibeli (President), S Brown (President Elect), J van Niekerk (Immediate Past President), N Gopal (Chief Executive Officer), M Kekana, A König, L Razack, N Radebe, S Nosarka

**National Councillors:** I Mothibeli (President), N Gopal (Chief Executive Officer), F Haffeejee, P Levett, W Lord, Z Marinakos, S Berowsky, T Myers, PC Potgieter, B Mncube, M Clampett, R Edelson, P Altenroxel, B Khumalo, F Smith, K Roman

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voice in discussions on land reform, infrastructure development, and sustainability—critical issues that shape the future of the industry.

Mothibeli highlighted the profound influence Gopal has had, both within South Africa and globally: "Your advocacy has ensured that SAPOA remains at the forefront of key national conversations. From championing sustainable development to navigating complex land reform policies, you have positioned SAPOA as a leading voice in the property sector, both locally and internationally. Your work has left an indelible mark on the industry."

Gopal's ability to build strong relationships with government, industry stakeholders, and international partners has solidified SAPOA's influence in the policy space, allowing the organisation to effectively represent the interests of property owners in South Africa.

### **A Humble Reflection on a Remarkable Journey**

In an emotional response to the tribute, Neil Gopal reflected on his journey, expressing deep gratitude for the trust placed in him over the years: "I'm deeply humbled by this recognition. It has been an incredible journey, working alongside so many dedicated individuals in this industry. The passion and commitment of everyone in this room—and across the country—are what inspire me and my team every day. SAPOA's success is a reflection of the hard work of our members and the trust they've placed in us to represent them."

He continued, acknowledging the collective effort that has fueled SAPOA's growth: "I am only able to do what I do because of the dedication and support of our members. For two decades, you have trusted me to lead and advocate for this industry, and for that, I am eternally grateful. Together, we've faced challenges and celebrated victories, and I look forward to continuing this journey with all of you."

As SAPOA embarks on a new chapter under the leadership of President Itumeleng Mothibeli, the foundation laid by as the CEO Gopal will undoubtedly continue to guide the organisation's future. His legacy is one of growth, resilience, and an unwavering commitment to the property sector's advancement.

### **Mothibeli concluded the tribute with a note of optimism**



"Neil, your dedication has been an inspiration to all of us. The strong foundations you have built ensure that SAPOA will continue to thrive. We are excited about the future and confident that, with your leadership, SAPOA will remain a driving force in the property industry. Thank you for your tireless service, and here's to continued growth and success."

As SAPOA moves forward, the organisation remains committed to addressing the challenges facing the South African property industry while fostering sustainable development and economic growth. Gopal's leadership will forever be remembered as a cornerstone of SAPOA's achievements over the past two decades.

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