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Official Launch of Ithuba Writing Project

What: The Minister of Education, the Honorable Naledi Pandor, will celebrate World Literacy Month by launching the Ithuba Writing Project that is developing more than 600 000 South African learning materials in all official languages. This USAID (U.S. Agency for International Development)-sponsored project is a collaboration between the Department of Education, the University of Texas at San Antonio, READ Educational Trust and the Molteno Project. The first set of 16 storybooks will be revealed at the launch.

When: September 10, 2007

Time: 11:30 am – 14:30 pm

Where: Dr. Mathole Motshekga Primary School, Corner Rietduiker Rd and Falcon St Rabie Ridge, Midrand (entrance in Korhaan Crescent)

Summary: The Ithuba Writing Project is supported by USAID with funding from the U.S. President's Africa Education Initiative (AEI), designed to improve educational opportunities for Africa's children. The development of textbooks and learning materials is a vital component. Ithuba includes training for South African writers and illustrators to learn how to prepare children's supplementary reading books of high literary quality that connect to Life Orientation, Mathematics and Natural Science curricula. Educators gain opportunities in technology usage to help create the learning materials that focus on the four most marginalized languages.

The 3-year project aims to:

- (a) support the valuing of mother-tongue based education;
- (b) provide a model for material development by classroom teachers;
- (c) increase the technology skills of classroom teachers;
- (d) begin to equalize and provide an adequate infrastructure of print-rich classrooms in South Africa; and
- (e) create an innovative model of writing instruction uniquely based in South Africa.

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