

From the desk of **Jonathan Goldberg**  
CEO at Global Business Solutions  
Tel: 043 721 1030 Email: johnny@iafrica.co.za



## **Navigating 2017**

Welcome back!

I trust that you all enjoyed a relaxing time with friends and family over the December break and have returned refreshed and ready to take on 2017.

With all that is happening in the economy and on the political front, 2017 promises to be as busy, and potentially as turbulent, as last year. As always, we're committed to partnering with our clients to empower them to manage uncertainty and drive the highest levels of compliance and sustainability.

Following the success of our inaugural GBS Employment Conference, we've decided to make it an annual feature on our calendar. This year's edition, "Navigating the Employment Landscape", promises to be just as interesting.

## **Guiding you to Transform**

Workplace transformation continues to be a big challenge for many businesses and the continuation of the poor employment equity numbers reported to the Commission has prompted the Department of Labour to up their efforts to drive transformation, largely through wider inspections, audits and the use of the large-scale fines which the Employment Equity Amendment Act makes provisions for.

At this event, we will welcome back the Employment Equity Commissioners, including the Chair Tabea Kabinde, and our very own Thembi Chagonda, who will show us where we are one year on – sadly, another indictment on the state of transformation efforts within the broader business sector. Because we understand that there are genuine obstacles, such as skills shortages, salary premiums and difficulty with recruitment and retention of PDI, we're committed to guiding you to address these. True transformation cannot take place in a vacuum and so we've invited our colleagues from Joint Prosperity who will share their insights about how organisations can assess employees (and candidates), particularly PDI, and identify opportunities through the multitude of skills development initiatives available, to upskill, empower and promote these individuals into the levels of business where EE figures are still failing to achieve desired targets.

## **It's all about the Money**

The discussions surrounding national minimum wage will only gather momentum as we head into the ANC succession race period. Uncertainty over the continuation of the Youth Tax Incentive has been quelled with the extension of the scheme, albeit with changes that restrict larger companies' benefit. Equal Pay for Work of Equal Value and the changes to the LRA in respect to how employees can be hired via TES have further complicated the environment with many businesses fearing a dramatic hike in labour costs. Professor Haroon Borat, of UCT, will share some of the key findings of his research into the effect of national minimum wage, the impact of the Youth Tax Incentive and the role and scope of the Temporary Employment Services (TES) sector. This is a great opportunity to interact with one of the leading researchers in the country and to get the answers you need to assist in budgeting and workforce planning.

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Goldberg, De Villiers & Myburgh (Pty) Ltd – Reg. No. 1993/092511/07  
Directors - Jonathan Goldberg B.Comm LLB MBA, Mphathi Mgqaliso B.Sc. M.Sc.MBA, Thembi Chagonda B.Soc.Sci, Diploma in Labour Law  
[www.globalbusiness.co.za](http://www.globalbusiness.co.za)

**East London** – Global House, 3 Pearce Street, Berea, 5241 | **Tel:** 043 7211030 | **Fax:** 043 7211027 | **Email:** johnny@iafrica.com  
**Johannesburg** – Harrow Court 2, Isle of Houghton, Boundary Road, Houghton, 2006 | **Tel:** 011 4833722 | **Fax:** 011 4831650 | **Email:** thembi@globalbusiness.co.za  
**Port Elizabeth** – 274 Cape Road, Newton Park, 6055 | **Tel:** 041 3640472 | **Fax:** 041 3630043 | **Email:** denver@globalbusiness.co.za  
**Cape Town** – 22<sup>nd</sup> Floor, ABSA Centre, 2 Riebeeck St, Cape Town, 8001 | **Tel:** 021 4181617 | **Fax:** 021 4181619 | **Email:** grant@globalbusiness.co.za  
**Durban** - 274 Cape Road, Newton Park, 6055 | **Tel:** 041 3640472 | **Fax:** 041 3630043 | **Email:** robyn@globalbusiness.co.za

## **Economic Impact of Labour Law**

Professor Borhat will join myself and others on a panel to debate the real impact of labour legislation on South Africa's economy. This is an ideal opportunity to pose all your burning questions to leading experts in the field.

We're also delighted to announce that Irvin Jim will join us for a panel discussion on the State of Collective Bargaining and what needs to change to ensure that we find more effective methods of managing the inevitable power play between business and labour. The statistics, including from the annual World Economic Forum, surrounding South Africa's performance in the area of employer-employee relations continue to be telling and, as any business that has lived through a prolonged strike knows, the long-term economic impact is enormous. This promises to be a highlight of the day!

The CCMA's Cameron Morajane will join us for an interactive discussion on Dispute Resolution in South Africa, sharing recent examples and learnings that could assist you in improving our workplace efforts as well as those that take place in external forums such as the CCMA.

## **Adv Anton Myburgh shares insights**

We welcome one of SA's finest legal minds, Advocate Anton Myburgh, as he joins the stage with Craig Kirchmann to unpack the most important case law from 2016/2017. Shared in pragmatic fashion, the lessons from these cases can be used in your business to ensure ongoing compliance.

We are really excited to offer the premier employment conference in South Africa and welcome you and your colleagues to our 2017 edition. Seats are limited and booking is now open so I urge you to call one of the lovely ladies in our offices to secure your seat.

Here's wishing you a prosperous year ahead.

Johnny