

**SPEECH BY MEC FOR COGTA, HON. R.M MTSHWENI ON  
THE OCCASION OF A SPECIAL SITTING FOR THE  
PROVINCIAL HOUSE OF TRADITIONAL LEADERS TO  
TABLE DEPARTMENTAL PLANS FOR TRIBAL  
COMMUNITIES AND SUPPORT FOR TRADITIONAL  
LEADERSHIP**

**DATE: 5 JULY 2016**

**VENUE: PROVINCIAL LEGISLATURE**

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**HONOURABLE CHAIRPERSON OF THE MPUMALANGA  
HOUSE OF TRADITIONAL LEADERS, KGOSHI MOKOENA**

**HONOURABLE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE HOUSE,  
INKHOSI NGOMANE**

**MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE**

**CHAIRPERSONS OF THE LOCAL HOUSES**

**AMAKHOSI/ MAKGOSHI IN OUR MIDST**

**ACTING HEAD OF DEPARTMENT, MR NTOMBELA**

**DISTINGUISHED GUESTS**

**LADIES AND GENTLEMEN**

- 1 Hon. Chairperson, we are truly honoured as a department for the invitation to this august house to present our developmental plans for traditional communities and the support for the institution of traditional leadership in Mpumalanga. This presents a rare opportunity for us to share with you our level of commitment as the ANC-led government to the course of traditional leaders since 1994 when we assumed power, in an attempt to restore the dignity of Amakhosi/Makgoshi.

- 2 The Premier, Hon. DD Mabuza reiterated this commitment when he addressed Amakhosi during the Opening of the House in March this year, when he said: **"Our commitment to restore the dignity of Amakhosi knows no boundary. Notwithstanding the limited resources at our disposal, we are pulling out all stops to make this commitment a reality"**.
  
- 3 Our plans and our actions are geared towards the realization of this commitment and for the envisaged realization of Chapter 12 of the Constitution, which states the following: **"The institution, status and role of traditional leadership, according to customary law, are recognized, subject to the Constitution"**.
  
- 4 Added to this commitment is the assurance we have made to the tribal communities that their rights are equally as important as all other communities and will never be treated as second class citizens in the implementation of government programmes.

## **DELIVERY OF WATER AND SANITATION**

- 5 Hon. Chairperson, access to basic services such as water and sanitation remains one of the focal points of the ANC-led government. It is anchored on the manifesto adopted by the ruling party, in an effort to make the **'better life for all'** commitment, a reality. Communities in the tribal areas must know that this government will pursue this matter to the latter until it is achieved in our life time.

- 6 In the new financial year, the three spheres of government have put together more than R2 billion to address water challenges in all areas including those in the jurisdiction of traditional leaders. A total number of 169 projects are planned for this financial year.
- 7 We have already completed ninety (90) of them and fifty-two (52) of them are to be completed by the end of June in various areas across the province.
- 8 In these projects, short term job opportunities were created for the local communities through the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP).

With this intervention, Mpumalanga is gearing itself to provide water to all households by 2030 as set out in the National Development Plan (NDP). In Ehlanzeni District we are implementing 87 water projects with the help of Rand Water. In Gert Sibande District we are implementing 47 projects and in Nkangala District, we are implementing 35 projects.

- 9 We have already recorded milestone achievements in some areas. For example, the package plant in Mooiplaas, under Somcuba-Bhevula Traditional Council and Aventura has been completed. In Mayflower, the construction of the pipeline bulk storage will be completed by end of June. In Mkhondo Municipality, installation of bulk pipeline to Rustplaas, Maphepheni, Malayinini and Forestview will be completed by end of June.

10 We have completed a Geo-Hydrological study to address the inherent bulk water challenges for the Dr JS Moroka Municipality. The Tweefontein Waste Water Treatment Works and the Kwamhlanga Sun City D water reticulation and the Kwaggafontein Waste supply under the Ndzundza-Somphalali Traditional Council, will be completed by June.

11 In Nkomazi, two water projects will be implemented by Rand Water in addition to the Masibekela bulk water pipeline, under the Mlambo Traditional Council.

12 Part of the R2 billion allocation for water will be utilized to drill boreholes as an interim intervention to cushion communities against the acute shortage of water, compounded by the persistent drought. Some of the areas targetted for the boreholes are listed below:

- ***Gomora, Dludluma, Langeloo in Nkomazi.***
- ***Leroro, Matibidi, Shaga in Thaba Chweu.***
- ***KaMadubula, Ka-Mthaliyane in Umjindi.***
- ***Zimbabwe, Zoeknog A & B, Mphenyatsatsi in Bushbuckridge.***
- ***Kleipfontein, Mandela Msholozzi, Vreisgewaght in Thembisile Hani.***

13 As we make these interventions, we appeal to Amakhosi to play a leading role as champions, to safeguard the boreholes against vandalism as a measure for the sustainable supply of water. This will not only be for the benefit of the people, but for the domestic animals as well, as we grapple with the drought.

## **JOB CREATION INITIATIVE**

14 Hon. Chairperson, as a matter of fact communities in rural areas are on the receiving end of the harsh reality of the grinding effects of poverty. Lack of economic opportunities is the main contributing factor. For the first time, our Provincial Government is teaming up with Amakhosi to fight poverty in this financial year. This will be done through the implementation of a Community Works Programme (CWP) as an intervention.

15 Through this initiative, 1815 short term job opportunities will be created with a view to provide an income to households. The focus will be in 17 Traditional Councils, as a start and will be rolled over to other traditional councils as we source funds to support this initiative. 150 opportunities will be created in areas of each of the two Kings, whilst 100 opportunities will be created in each of the following traditional councils:

- Mathibela TC of Kgoshi Mokoena,
- Hhoyi TC of Inkhosi Ngomane,
- Ndzuzu-Fene TC of Ikosi Mahlangu,
- Duma TC of Inkhosi Mnisi,
- Mandlamakhulu TC of Inkhosi Malaza,
- Mawewe TC of Inkhosikati Mkhathshwa,
- Mlambo TC of Inkhosi Mlambo II,
- Mohlala TC of Kgoshikgadi Mohlala,
- Bakgatla ba Mocha TC of Kgosi Maluka,
- Somphalali TC of Ikosi BR Mahlangu,
- Mnisi TC of Hhosi Mnisi,
- Mantjolo TC of Inkhosi Mnisi,
- Malele TC of Kgosi Malele,
- Matsamo TC of Inkhosi Shongwe,

- Setlare TC of Kgoshi Chiloane.

We hope to expand this intervention in the next financial year so as to implement it in all traditional councils. The number of job opportunities will also increase.

## **SUPPORT FOR TRADITIONAL LEADERSHIP**

16 Hon. Chairperson, over the years, our Provincial Government, under the leadership of Premier DD Mabuza recorded milestone achievements in the provision of support for traditional leaders. When we purchased a new fleet of vehicles for all our 58 traditional leaders and the two (2) Izingwenyama last year, we sought to make this commitment a reality.

17 Added to this were five (5) cattle for each traditional council as part of the Masibuyel' eMasimini programme to promote farming.

18 In this financial year, we are seized with the process of purchasing tractors to be delivered to all the 60 traditional councils in line with the Premier's commitment during the Opening of the House. This is an added support for Amakhosi as we promote farming to address food security.

19 We are unshaken by the criticism levelled against government in support of Amakhosi. Instead we are propelled to do more as we look for innovative means to maximize the limited financial resources at our disposal. We have realized that tribal communities are reaping the fruits of the support, as Amakhosi, extend it to their subjects.

20 Hon. Chairperson, cultural ceremonies contribute significantly to social cohesion. We are a heterogeneous society with cultural diversity. Sometimes this is hijacked by individuals for their own selfish gain, and contribute to the displacement of foreign nationals, who have sought refuge in our peaceful country.

21 In this financial year, we are implementing the decision to increase the grants for cultural ceremonies from R60 000 to R200 000 for our Senior Traditional Leaders and R300 000 each for Izingwenyama. R12,2 million is allocated to support this programme.

22 These ceremonies are not only a platform for social cohesion but a perfect knowledge-sharing system of our cultures and our history to the younger generation. The value for the financial support must be seen in the context of working with the traditional leadership to prevent the erosion of our cultural values and the African way of life.

23 Hon. Chairperson, when I tabled the Policy and Budget speech of our department in May this year, I indicated that **R14,5 million** is earmarked for the development of offices for traditional councils.

24 With this allocation we will be constructing three (4) new offices in the 3 districts, for the following traditional councils: *Mahlaphahlapha, Mantjolo, Mlambo* and *Bakgatla Ba Mocha Ba Moepi*.

25 We will complete the refurbishment of the Royal Palaces of our two Kings.

26 We will also be renovating 6 (six) Traditional Councils, namely:

- *Msogwaba.*
- *Empakeni.*
- *Emfumbeni.*
- *Enkambeni.*
- *Ebutsini.*
- *Mpisikazi.*

27 Hon. Chairperson, land invasion remains a major threat for the realization of our developmental plans. Amakhosi have registered their concern on this matter sharply. I would like to assure this august sitting that this thorny issue has not escaped our attention as we work in partnership with relevant stakeholders to arrest it. The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed by all affected parties is our pillar to bring this problem to an end.

28 Our responsibility as COGTA is to ensure that it is enforced for justice to take its course against the perpetrators. In cases where the MOU was enforced, such as in Thembisile Hani Local Municipality, the results are positive.

29 The municipality obtained a court interdict against perpetrators of this criminal act in Kwamhlanga and as such, cases of land invasion have stopped.

## CONCLUSION

30 Hon. Chairperson, we are at the tail end of the task to finalize the 163 disputes and claims submitted to the department. These disputes and claims were attended to thoroughly and with determination by the Committee on Traditional Leadership Disputes and Claims, whose term of office came to an end in December last year.

31 We have submitted a report to the Hon. Premier for consideration. Once more, we would like to appeal to the traditional leadership to accept the outcome of this task, whether it is in their favour or not. We are convinced that our intervention in this regard will yield the desired outcome, that of bringing stability and restore the credibility and the integrity of the affected royal families.

32 Hon. Chairperson, the recent death cases of initiates in the ingoma in Nkangala region is a cause for concern. This undermines our efforts for a death-free ingoma season.

33 We are working with the house under the leadership of Kgoshi Mokoena in all areas where ingoma is taking place this season to ensure compliance to the Ingoma Act. We welcome the support by the MEC for Health, Hon. Gillion Mashego who donated five bakkies to the Ingoma Forum to be used for monitoring. This donation and other forms of support, which include the availability of health professionals to check the health status of initiates, will go a long way to save the lives of young boys and girls, going through the passage rite to adulthood.

34 In conclusion, Hon. Chairperson, we condemn in the strongest possible terms the attack against Inkhosi Nkosi of eMpakeni Traditional Council recently, whose house was set on fire. This was the second incident after his offices were set on fire. We call on the law enforcement agencies to arrest the culprits and for justice to take its course. Further delays may breed further attack by the same culprits who has no regard for the Constitutional right of uNdabezitha.

Ke a leboga.