

SPEAKING NOTES FOR MEC SPD SKHOSANA AT KING MAKHOSKE II'S ANNUAL TRADITIONAL CEREMONY IN BRONKHORSPRUIT ON SATURDAY, 1 MARCH 2014

Your Excellency, Ingwenyama Makhosoke II

The Chairperson of the Mpumalanga House of Traditional Leaders, Kgosi Mokoena

Deputy Chairperson of the House, Inkhosi Ngomane

Executive members of the House

Our esteemed Traditional Leaders

Members of the royal families

Honourable Executive Mayors and Councillors

Distinguished guests

Ladies and gentlemen

All protocol observed

- Ngwenyama, I watched with great excitement the cultural dances displayed here this morning.
- Ibutho and young maidens dancing with pride for your Excellency and your guests

- As the young maidens were dancing, one of them reminded me of a story which was shared to me some time ago about learners giving an answer in a class.
- The teacher asked, Lindiwe, one of the bright learners, to locate America on the world map.
- Lindiwe did not disappoint, but correctly pointed at America on the map.
- With excitement, the teacher turned to the whole class and asked “Now class, tell me: Who discovered the United States of America?”
- With excitement, the class replied: “Lindiwe!”
- All I can say is that we are overwhelmed by pride when we see young maidens, in Ndebele traditional gear, taking part in our cultural activities such as these.
- May you continue doing so and make this a legacy for generations to come!
- Ngwenyama, I am honoured to be part of the celebration today.

- The Hon. Premier, DD Mabuza, could not join us due to other pressing commitments and I would like to apologize on his behalf.
- He may not be with us physically, but I know that he is with us in spirit because of his passion for cultural activities, especially after opening the last session of our provincial Legislature yesterday, before the elections on 7 May 2014.
- Ngwenyama, your role in education and your efforts in preserving our Ndebele language is an inspiration to us all.
- We will find a way to support you, so that the educational fund you have established for students studying for isiNdebele at the University of Venda, may not be in vain.
- Your dedication as Chairperson of the Local House in Nkangala, cannot go unnoticed.
- We are convinced that the Patrice Motsepe Foundation could not look any further than your Excellency, when they were looking for a role player in the poverty alleviation programmes.

- Ngwenyama. We stand on the edge of the end of the five year term of this Administration led by the ANC since 2009 and at the same time, we celebrate 20 years of our democracy.
- we continue to cherish the role of Traditional Leadership in the struggle against colonialism and dispossession.
- The Province has committed itself to strengthening the role of the institutions of Traditional Leadership to be at the centre of development in their areas of jurisdiction.
- We have enjoyed good working relations with the Institution of Traditional Leadership and the communities in their areas of jurisdiction. We have seen improved participation in our education programmes, CRDP interventions and healthcare initiatives.
- Working together with Amakhosi, the ANC led government has increased the number of traditional councils from 59 to 61
- We look back with pride the road we have travelled in as far as the commitment we made to Amakhosi is concerned.

- The restoration of the status of traditional leadership remains the hall mark of the progress of this Administration.
- Our commitment to provide Amakhosi with the tools of trade is well on track, as is the case with the renovation of the offices for our esteemed Emakhosi.
- The credibility and the status of Emakhosi important for us all.
- The establishment of the Provincial Committee on Claims and Disputes for traditional leadership, gives us hope that disputes and fights over the leadership of Kings and Queens, perpetrated by the previous apartheid government, will soon be a thing of the past, and that the rightful Kings and Queens will be restored accordingly.
- Had it not been the co-operation of Amakhosi in dealing with these complex issues, the committee's work would be in vain. We thank you for your co-operation.
- We hope that your co-operation even in areas of community development, health, education and socio-economic issues will help government to improve the lives of our people.

- Our efforts to provide basic services to areas in the jurisdiction of traditional leaders continue.
- With limited resources and funds, we are trying our utmost best to connect communities in rural areas with water, electricity, sanitation and proper roads.
- We appeal for patience in areas where these amenities are yet to be seen: ***Rome was never built in one day!***
- Ngwenyama, Let me not steal the thunder for the Premier by going beyond the scope of what he expected me to share with your Excellency and the nation gathered here on this important day.
- The Premier will outline the plan of our partnership with Amakhosi when he opens the Mpumalanga House of Traditional Leaders on the 14th of March 2014 in the legislature.
- Ngwenyama, as I conclude, allow me to talk briefly about two important issues:
- We are approaching the circumcision season.

- We urge all traditional leaders in areas where this culture of circumcision is still practiced, to do it with care.
- We cannot afford to loose more lives in Mpumalanga.
- We appeal to your Excellency and all Amakhosi to co-operate with government in the efforts to prevent any further deaths in the schools where circumcisions take place.
- Parliament has just passed the bill for land redistribution in the country.
- This bill seeks to address the effects of the infamous Land Act of 1913, in which our forefathers woke up one morning and found themselves foreigners in the land of their birth.
- On Thursday, President Jacob Zuma opened the National House of Traditional Leaders where in he appealed to all our people, especially in tribal areas, whose land was dispossessed, to take advantage of this opportunity, by submitting applications.
- We have until March 2018 to claim back our land.

- We appeal to legal practitioners, Amakhosi and the professionals in our communities to assist our people in this exercise, especially in the rural areas.
- Bayethe!