

**KEY NOTE ADDRESS BY MEC FOR COGTA IN
MPUMALANGA, HON. RM. MTSHWENI DURING THE
MANDELA DAY – WOMEN’S MONTH CELEBRATION IN
THUBELIHLE, IN KRIEL, EMALAHLENI MUNICIPALITY ON
16 AUGUST 2014**

PROGRAMME DIRECTOR, CLLR MBUKU

HONOURABLE COUNCILLORS OF BOTH NKANGALA
DISTRICT AND EMALAHLENI LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

THE LEADERSHIP OF THE TRIPARTITE ALLIANCE IN OUR
MIDST

THE ACTING HEAD OF DEPARTMENT, MR R MNISI

ESTEEMED MEMBERS OF SENIOR MANAGEMENT OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF COGTA

I GREET YOU ALL

- 1 Programme Director, this morning we took part in the renovation of the Impilo Primary School as part of our 67 minutes in honour of Tata Mandela. We were honoured with a warm welcome by the leadership of the school, led by the Principal, Ms S Zondi. Our choice of the school was in part informed by its poor condition with a view to contribute towards its improvement. And I must say that our choice was correct.
- 2 With the help of our esteemed Councillors and COGTA officials, led by the Acting Head of Department, Mr Mnisi, we rolled up our sleeves to paint the walls of the

school. We have purchased material to fix the floor and we have requested people with the right skills to do that part, lest we mess it up!

- 3 Programme Director, we have identified 27 learners to provide them with school uniforms. The uniforms will be delivered this coming week in support of learners from needy backgrounds as a ploy to encourage them to attend classes. All what we have done for the school, is our 67 minutes in honour of the struggle icon, Madiba, our first democratic President, after the 1994 elections. We are inspired by his vision about education. He once said: ***“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world”***. And this is true.
- 4 Improvement of education remains one of our key five priorities for the ANC-led government. So the painting of the Primary School this morning further sought to support this priority and Madiba’s vision.
- 5 We hope that learners and educators will take this initiative seriously in honour of Madiba. We hope this intervention will motivate the school to produce the best results at the end of the year, as an indicator that the school appreciates our efforts today.
- 6 We are a caring government anchored in the values of Tata Madiba. As such, we distributed 144 blankets to the elderly. By so doing, the leadership of this government, led by the Hon. Premier, DD Mabuza, is living up to those values. We are sending a message of love and hope, which Mandela taught us. He has given us more than we could give back to him.

- 7 Madiba would not have folded his arms when bo-Gogo nabo-Mkhulu were freezing during the winter season in Kriel. He would not have folded his arms when the unemployed were exposed to poverty.
- 8 The Mandela Day is held on 18 July to coincide with his birthday. Our department was scheduled to join the international community to celebrate it. However, we could not do so due to other commitments. However, the Madiba Day is a daily activity. For a selfless leader, a humanitarian, a peace maker, and a reconciliator, it is never too late to mark his day. Hence we decided to mark it today. Equally, we could not have thought of an ideal place to celebrate the Mandela Day than Thubelihle here in Kriel.
- 9 Programme Director, the Madiba Day has overlapped into the women's month. That is why we are integrating the Madiba Day with Women's month in honour of the role women played in the democratic dispensation of South Africa. (***Wathinda Abafazi, Wathinda Imbokodo. Malibongwe, igama lamakhosikazi***).
- 10 It has been 60 years since the adoption of the Women's charter. The adoption of the charter became a turning point for a democratic South Africa, which we are celebrating 20 years of its anniversary.
- 11 The charter became a defining moment for South Africa which suffered severely under the draconian laws.

The women spoke in unison when they said: ***“We, the women of South Africa, wives and mothers,***

working women and housewives, African, Indians, European and Coloured, hereby declare our aim of striving for the removal of all laws, regulations, conventions and customs that discriminate against us as women, and that deprive us in any way of our inherent right to the advantages, responsibilities and opportunities that society offers to any one section of the population.

- 12 The women's charter of 1954 gave expression to the common experiences, visions and aspirations of South African women, providing the platform for women to voice out their call for respect and recognition of their human dignity, rights and change in their status and material conditions.
- 13 Programme Director, we look back with pride the road we have travelled since then. South Africa has made significant legislative reforms and developed policies and programmes based on the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 and its Bill of Rights that seek to promote and protect women's rights in the home, in the communities and in the workplace.
- 14 As we celebrate women's month, we honour the women who led the struggle for the emancipation of women, such as ***Charlotte Maxeke, Albertina Sisulu, Adelaide Tambo, Mama Nomzamo Winnie Madikizela-Mandela, Ruth First, Lillian Ngoyi Frances Baard, Fatima Meer, Dorothy Nyembe, Florence 'Mam Flo' Mkhize, Ruth Mompati*** and many more.

We wish to take this opportunity to take this opportunity to commend the ANC-led government for its commitment to honour the women of South Africa. The national Women's day function was held last week in KwaZulu-Natal where the Honourable President, J.G Zuma announced various legislations aimed at protecting lives of women.

- 15 The Provincial Celebration of the women's Day will be held on 30 August 2014, at Masoyi near Hazyview in the Mbombela Municipality. This year's theme is called ***“Celebrating 60 years of the Women's Charter, and 20 years of democracy: Moving Women's Agenda Forward”***.
- 16 Programme Director, today is not a day for long speeches. As I conclude, I would like to invite one of our own Gogo, who was around when the women's charter was adopted. Gogo **Linah Ndaba**. Born in 1912, this year, she turned 102 years.

As we celebrate women's month, we would like to congratulate her and wish her long life. I would like to invite her to come to the front, to join me in cutting the cake to mark Mandiba Day and Women's month.

“Wathinta AbafaziWathinta Imbokodo”!!

“Together, we move South Africa forward”!!!