

**KEY NOTE ADDRESS BY MEC FOR COGTA, HON. R.M MTSHWENI DURING
THE ANNUAL FUNCTION OF THE MATSAMO TRADITIONAL COUNCIL**

VENUE: SCHOEMANSDAL

PROGRAMME DIRECTOR

NDABEZITHA M.E SHONGWE OF THE MATSAMO TRADITIONAL COUNCIL

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

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

ESTEEMED MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE OF THE HOUSE

**HONOURABLE CHAIRPERSON OF THE LOCAL HOUSE IN EHLANZENI, KM
NKOSI**

**BONKHE BONDABEZITHA ABAKHONA PHAKATHI KWETHU
NABONDLUNKHULU**

SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVES OF THE KINGDOM OF SWAZILAND

**THE EXECUTIVE MAYOR OF NKOMAZI LOCAL MUNICIPALITY, CLLR T
KHOZA**

DISTINGUISHED GUESTS

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

1. Programme Director, let me express our appreciation as the Mpumalanga Provincial Government led by the Honourable Premier, DD Mabuza to Inkhosi ME Shongwe for bringing stability and peace within the Matsamo Royal family and the community at large.
2. Those of you who are familiar with the history of the Matsamo Royal family will attest to the fact that this royal family is enjoying peace and stability after going through a painful period after the death of Inkhosi Johnson Shongwe.

3. We are encouraged by the fact that this Royal family has overcome that period in which members of the family had mistrust against each other. Inkhosi Shongwe is a rare breed amongst his peers due to the challenges he had to overcome when he succeeded his late father, as the heir to the throne in 2013.
4. On behalf of the Premier, who wished to attend this function, but could not, I would like to commend you for your sterling leadership and for bringing this nation together.
5. Programme Director, yesterday the Mpumalanga Provincial Government handed over a set of new vehicles and cattle to Amakhosi during a major function at the Mbombela Stadium in Mbombela. The vehicles were provided as tools of trade for Bo-Ndabezitha in an attempt to make their travelling easier as they attend to developmental issues for their under-developed areas.
6. The cattle were provided as part of the Provincial Government's initiative to promote farming and economic development through the Masibuyel Esibayeni programme. The cattle are yet to be delivered to Inkhosi Shongwe and all amakhosi on a date to be announced.
7. We are glad that Inkhosi Shongwe was amongst the recipients of this support, which came about after the Premier's commitment to purchase them during the opening of the house in March this year.
8. Despite the negative sentiments against the decision to purchase them, we remain unshaken in our resolve to support Amakhosi. Even the negative media reports, which seek to portray our government as wasting money, will never deter us to provide Amakhosi with the vehicles, construction of their offices and funding of ummomo.

9. We have taken a position not to dignify any negative sentiments which seek to divert our attention from recognizing the role of Amakhosi in the development of our communities in the rural areas, facing the harsh reality of poor economic conditions.

10. Despite the limited financial resources, the ANC-led government will endeavour to provide Amakhosi with the necessary support, be it vehicles, cattle and otherwise, in accordance with the radical decision adopted in 1994 to restore the dignity of Amakhosi.

11. Programme Director, land redistribution remains on the focus of the ANC-led government. The Freedom Charter, which forms the basis of the Constitution of South Africa, declares: ***“The land belongs to all who live in it”***. We are concerned that there are cases of illegal occupation of land in some areas within the jurisdiction of Inkhosi Shongwe, despite a call for registration of new claims for land ownership by the government.

12. The area next to the Mzinti village, between Tonga and Kamhlushwa, across the main road, is a classical example. We are witnessing people who are building shacks in an area that was never declared a residential zone.

13. That area has no infrastructure and the invaders will soon demand services and embark on service delivery protests. We appeal to those who are practising this illegal act to stop it. It is a criminal offence and will be treated as such.

14. Programme Director, the Nkomazi Local Municipality is in dire need of water. The recent heatwave experienced by Mpumalanga, contributes to the high demand for water. The levels of water in the local rivers, especially Inkomazi and Mlumati, are critically low. Dams are running dry. With no rain predicted soon, the situation is becoming desperate and calls for desperate measures.
15. We call on our people to use water sparingly. Those with beautiful gardens and lawns, must refrain from watering them, until the situation improves. We call upon car-wash owners to adhere to the strict water use, so that whatever drop of water we have in the reservoirs, can cater for household use until the rain season.
16. Furthermore, we call upon all our communities to fix leaking taps and pipes to prevent wastage. The war on leaks projects we have established in some municipalities, seeks to prevent the loss of water as part of our intervention.

Shongwe!!!! Mtimandze!!!!Bhambolunye