

**SPEAKERS NOTES BY MEC SPD SKHOSANA, AT THE INAUGURATION OF
INKOSI MICHEAL THEMBA YENDE OF THE OGENYANENI TRIBAL
AUTHORITY: 16 MARCH AT ISWEPE SPORTS GROUND**

Chairperson of the House of Traditional Leaders, Kgosi Mokoena

The Deputy Chairperson of the House of Traditional Leaders, Inkosi Ngomane

The Executive of the House of Traditional Leaders

Inkosi Themba Yende of the Ogenyaneni Tribal Authority

The National and Provincial Chairperson of the Committee on Disputes and Claims
on Traditional Leadership, Mr Bagudi Tolo and the entire Committee

The Executive Mayor of Gert Sibande District, Cllr M Nhlabathi

The Executive Mayor of Mkhondo Local Municipality, Cllr B Mtshali

Representatives from different Tribal Authorities present

Distinguished Guest

Ladies and Gentlemen

1. It gives me great pleasure to be standing here today and addressing this august gathering. The Premier Mr DD Mabuza and the Executive Council of the province send their warm wishes to the Yende People and the Ogenyaneni Tribal Authority. The Premier sends his sincere apologies that he could not be here today, due to other government commitments.

2. We are gathered here today, in a year where we remember 100 years to the year in which our people were forcefully removed from their land through the Land Act of 1913. This Act expropriated land from our people and rendered them nomads in their own country of birth as they had to move from one place to another in search of better land to graze their animals of grow their crops.

The good land was taken by the brutal regime. As the people were displaced from their land, their cohesive and integrated community structures which were led by their traditional leaders were also disrupted.

3. Today's gathering is part of governments efforts to address the imbalances that were created by the unjust apartheid regime. We are all aware that our cultures and beliefs were trampled on and looked down upon.
4. About two weeks ago we were at the Kwa-Ndlwalaza Tribal Authority for the Inauguration of Inkhosi MA Mahlobo. Today's ceremony is another milestone in the journey that has been undertaken by the Provincial Government under the guidance of the Provincial Committee on Disputes and Claims on Traditional Leadership to investigate all disputes on boundary issues, succession disputes and divisions amongst royal families.
5. The continued divisions and disputes on boundary issues, succession disputes and divisions among royal families is a matter that is of great concern for us as government. The continued divisions and disputes undermine the symbol of unity that our traditional leaders are reknown for. These divisions and disputes further spill onto the communities thus dividing the very communities that we seek to lead.
6. We are encouraged by the work that has been done by the Provincial Committee on Disputes and Claims. The committee has been investigating based on the following;
 - a) whether a claim on traditional leadership or headmanship was established in accordance with customary laws and customs
 - b) cases where a position of traditional leadership title or right is under contestation
 - c) claims by communities to be recognised as traditional communities

- d) the legitimacy of the establishment or disestablishment of tribes
 - e) disputes resulting from the determination of traditional authority boundaries as a result of merging or division of tribes
 - f) All traditional leadership claims and disputes dating from 1st September 1927 to the coming into operation of provincial legislation dealing with traditional leadership and related matters.
 - g) Gender related disputes relating to traditional leadership positions arising after 27 April 1994.
- 7 The Committee had received a total of 169 complaints that needed to be investigated. Since assuming its functions on the 1st of September 2011 the Committee has profiled all the claims that it has received.
- 8 The Committee has finalized and made recommendations on 29 disputes and claims of which 18 relate to headmanship and 9 to senior traditional leadership claim and 2 to senior traditional leadership dispute for the decision of the of the Premier.
- 9 Two of the cases that the Premier has considered were found to be valid and full recognition was given to the Yende and Mahlobo traditional communities under Mkhondo Municipality. That is why we are here today to celebrate the restoration of the Chieftaincy Yende People, who have a very rich history.
- 10 The Yende people who originate from the present day Vryheid in the KwaZulu Natal province were not spared of such brutality and disruption. The history of the Yende people shows us that Ndengezi the first known leader and founder of the Yende dynasty was of the Impohlo regiment under King Shaka, around the 19th century. He was one of the Zulu Warriors who took part in the expulsion of Mzilikazi. The Yende people left Ogenyaneni and moved to Utrecht to Wakkerstroom. It was here that the Transvaal Republic allocated them a farm called “Kaffir Locatie 410”. During Paul Krugers rule Ndengezi moved to oHlelo and settled in the banks of the river oHlelo.

Ndengezi died passes on in this area around 1881. Thunzi who took over from Ndengezi moved the Yende people to Idalia 108 and around 1906 moved again to Kloppersrust 10. Ndlwembi took over from his father's brother Donsi in 1928, who acted on his father's (Thunzi) behalf when he died.

11 Ndlwembi had two wives. The first one was Bhekizizwe (Ma Nxumalo) and the second one was Bathiyeze (Malubelo). Ndlwembi son Zacharia died before he could take over the reigns. This led to Zacharias son, Leonard, being afraid to take over the reigns because his father died before he could take over the position. He was also faced with a challenge that the Yende people were now displaced. He also showed no interest in the traditional leadership matters. Instead he chose to have a full time employment leaving headman to run the affairs of the community. Leonard died without having assumed the leadership role of his people.

12 As we restore the Chieftaincy to the Yende People, I want to assure all of you that we will continue to work with you as you address the many challenges that lied ahead. The restoration of the Chieftaincy is the first step in the long journey hade of making sure that restore the dignity of our people and also bring about a better life to them.

13 I must also add that this current administration led by President Jacob Zuma and Premier DD Mabuza in the province has made it a priority to address the needs of rural communities and to restore the dignity and respect of our Traditional Leaders. Let me reiterate the call made by President Jacob Zuma in his first State of the Nation Address in 2009, where he said;

14 “Abantu basemakhaya nabo banelungelo lokuba nogesi namanzi, izindlu zangasese ezigijima amanzi, imigwaqo, izindawo zokuqeda isizungu nezemidlalo kanye nezindawo zokuthenga eziphucukile njengasemadolobheni. Nabo banelungelo lokusizwa kwezolimo ukuze bazitshalele imifino nokunye, bafuye nemfuyo bakwazi ukuziphilisa. Sizimisele ukuwuqala lomkhankaso wokwakha izingqalasizinda ezindaweni zasemakhaya. Uma sibambisene nezakhamizi, amakhosi, amakhansela nezinduna siyokwazi ukuwusheshisa lomsebenzi. Sicela abahlala ezindaweni zasemakhaya baqale balungiselele ukutshela uhulumeni ukuthi yiziphi izinto abazidinga ngokushesha. Uma sisebenza ngokubambisana sizokwenza okuningi.”
We still remain committed to the commitment that has been made by the President.

15 We are aware that a large number of rural communities continue to live below the poverty line. Government will continue to support such communities through programmes such as the Comprehensive Rural Development Strategy, Masibuyele Emasimini and Masibuyele Esibayeni Programmes.

16 Today is a day a day of celebrations and I would not like to take up a lot of time with a long speech. On behalf of the Mpumalanga Provincial Government, I would like to congratulate Inkosi Yende and the Yende People on the restoration of the Yende Chieftaincy. As we hand over the Certificate as signed by the Premier, we say that as from today you are fully recognised and we wish you well in your endeavours. I thank you.