

SPEECH DELIVERED BY MEC FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT MME NKAKARENG RAKGOALE ON BEHALF OF THE PREMIER OF LIMPOPO HONOURABLE CHUPU STAN MATHABATHA AT THE LAUNCH OF THE GOOD GREEN DEEDS PROGRAMME AT MARAPONG SPORTS GROUNDS IN LEPHALALE LOCAL MUNICIPALITY IN WATERBERG DISTRICT, LIMPOPO PROVINCE ON 27 JUNE 2019.

The Executive Mayor of Waterberg District Municipality
The Mayor of Lephalale Local Municipality
Colleagues in the Provincial Executive Council
Executive Mayors and Councilors from the width and breadth of our province
Traditional Leaders and other invited guests
Officials from the different spheres of our government
Ladies and Gentlemen

I greet you this afternoon on behalf of the Premier of Limpopo Honourable Chupu Stan Mathabatha.

Programme Director

On the 5th of June 2019 citizens of this planet gathered around the world to celebrate the World Environmental Day under theme “Air Pollution”. The World Environmental Day event has been celebrated the world over annually since 1973 to raise global awareness about the importance of a healthy and green environment in the human lives. It is celebrated as a constant reminder to all of us to solve environmental issues by implementing some positive environmental actions as well as to create worldwide awareness that every one of us is responsible for saving the environment.

Ladies and Gentlemen

It is a fact, that most people on earth today know that air pollution is hazardous to human health. The effects of air pollution can have devastating consequences on the health of a people and their environment.

Air Pollution hurts the planet with increasingly deadly effects on life. Within the context of conserving and preserving our planet the United Nations Environmental Assembly had made a clarion call on countries to take measures to usher in a greener, cleaner and a more sustainable future. Addressing the United Nations Environment Assembly comprised of Heads of State and government ministers in Nairobi, Kenya, UN’s Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohammed eloquently called on member States, civil society and environmental activists “to reshape the global economy into one that rewards careful stewardship and punishes waste and pollution.”

Similarly UN Secretary-General Antonio Gutierrez, once told the World Summit of the R20 Coalition that “We need to tax pollution, not people, and end subsidies for fossil fuels. Investors need to stop financing pollution, we need to scale up green ventures and increase lending for low-carbon solutions”. The UN Secretary-General had further insisted that the private sector and investment communities must support “bold and ambitious climate agenda”.

Programme Director

In the context of challenges posed by pollution, our shores have not been immune nor spared from the scourge of air pollution. Air pollution cost South Africa billions of rands in medical expenses and premature mortality. Developing countries like ours have a heavy reliance on fossil fuels, resulting in productivity losses and mortality due to high concentrations of air pollution, namely, fine particulate matter (PM). A recent IGC study indicates that 7.4% of all deaths in South Africa in 2012 were due to chronic exposure to fine Particulate Matter, costing the country up to 6% of its GDP.

High rates of TB and HIV/AIDS infection mean there is a critical need for South Africa-specific studies on the association between air pollution and mortality. It is for these reasons that we are gathered here as citizens of Limpopo, to create awareness that it is not only one person, a government nor an institution that is responsible to create a safe environment. It is a responsibility for all of us as citizens of planet earth to create a safer and clean environment for ourselves and those generations that will follow ours and beyond.

Ladies and gentlemen

In our country, we have made much progress in creating safer and clean environments since [2002](#). However we have as well realized that more efforts are needed if the environment is to be protected from pollution. We have as nation decided on a national Clean and Safe South Africa Programme to mobilize every citizen. The aim of the Clean and Safe South Africa - Lend a Hand Programme is to promote environmental actions that take into consideration sustainable living practices. The President of South Africa, Mr. Cyril Ramaphosa launched the Good Green Deeds Campaign on the 8th of March 2019 at Sisa Dukashe Stadium, Mdantsane, East London in Eastern Cape. The Good Green Deeds Programme is a ground-breaking initiative that seeks to mobilize all sectors of South Africa to become more environmentally conscious in leading a deal for nature

Programme Director

We are therefore and beyond us gathering here today to mark and celebrate the World Environmental Day, and as government and citizens of Limpopo through this event, joining our compatriots in the rest of the country by launching the Good Green Deeds Programme. The Good Green Deeds Programme aims to help citizens to develop a sense of civic pride in clean neighborhoods and is destined to become a change in lifestyle towards keeping South Africa beautiful, whether it is by a simple act of denouncing anti-social habits of littering or other major challenges within our nation.

The Good Green Deeds is Programme linked to President Cyril Matamela Ramaphosa s'call for Thuma Mina campaign of stewardship and getting citizens involved in the "Keep South Africa Clean Programme". It is a programme destined is to ensure that every inhabitant of our land, from the President to the ordinary person take part in cleaning their neighborhoods and ensuring that our country is clean and free from litter and illegal dumps. It is possible and it can be done. Just this morning the leadership here started the programme of this event by joining our people in picking up litter in various areas in this municipality. Today the people of Rwanda takes pride in keeping their public spaces clean, and they do this by conducting their monthly clean-up programmes in their neighborhoods. Therefore it cannot be difficult for South Africans to duplicate such a noble practice. What then can prevents us as the people of Limpopo from making the exercise we embarked upon this morning part of our routines as both leadership and citizens?

Programme Director

We are using this launch of the Good Green Deeds Programme to make a call to all our people in the province to become environmentally conscious and start by taking one small action to prevent littering and illegal dumping. It is that one small action that can go a long way to inspire a global change in the fight against environmental degradation and ensuring that our country is free from litter and illegal dumps. Indeed let each one of us as citizens be an ambassador, a volunteer and an activist for a safe and clean environment.

Programme Director

As individuals, organizations, communities and as a nation we need to strive towards bringing about the realization of a cleaner and more environmentally presentable country. We need to change people's attitudes and behavior towards waste and its management, as well as to begin to take charge and responsibility of keeping our neighborhoods clean. Citizens in the Province and beyond have to take a stand against the litter in their neighborhoods and start to clean-up their areas. Our municipalities must ensure that enforcement measures are put in place such as to discourage the practice of illegal dumping.

We need to strive towards litter-free and no dumping behavior province by ensuring that citizens of our province are made aware of the impacts of poor waste management on their health and environment as well as being taught about proper management of their own waste to keep their surroundings clean. We need to encourage communities to have less waste generation rates through promoting separation at source, re-use, recycle and recovery of their waste and making available infrastructure to allow that behavioral change. We need to identify opportunities and advocate for entrepreneurship in the waste industry and access to green economy at the same time keeping our country clean.

Ladies and Gentlemen

Within the context of Thuma Mina Programme we call upon political heads and leaders, as well as other leaders in our society to take initiative and lead the Good Deeds Programme in order for the citizens to join in the initiative. In section 24 of Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, states that “Everyone has the right to an environment that is not harmful to their health or well-being and to have the environment protected, for the benefit of present and future generations, through reasonable legislative and other measures that prevent pollution and ecological degradation, promoting conservation, secure ecologically sustainable development and use of natural resources while promoting justifiable economic and social development.”

Climate change is already the single greatest threat to development and prosperity in Africa, including South Africa. It threatens to reverse all our development gains and the situation will dramatically deteriorate, unless there is a major shift in behavior, attitude and actions towards conservation and the environment. That change has to start now.

We need to work together with all citizens jointly in creating new behavioral patterns of individuals, groups and society as a whole to waste management issues for the sake of all of us. Where there is litter, society is urged to work together to clear litter and rubble that threatens our efforts to build a healthy South Africa. The private sector is key in changing the approach to materials management especially for those products that become waste at the end of their useful life. The Partnerships will bring about a closer working relationship and co-operate in various areas within the scope where the mandates overlap with an aim of leveraging professional networks, resources, and expertise and domain knowledge. We need to encourage the people of South Africa and the province to see it as their civic duty to reprimand any person who litters and do anything that impacts negatively on the environment in public. We need to mobilize our people to support municipalities in enforcement of by-laws in relation to keeping neighborhoods clean. As patriots and leaders, we need to strive towards leading

and joining our people in the crucial task to keep their cities, towns, villages and neighborhoods throughout the province clean. Today we say “# littering and illegal dumping must fall for a safe and clean environment!”

We thank you!