

SPEECH OF THE MEC FOR SPORT, ARTS AND CULTURE MS THANDI MORAKA MPL DURING THE NATIONAL INDIGENOUS GAMES FESTIVAL HOSTED IN SESHEGO SPORTS COMPLEX IN LIMPOPO PROVINCE ON THE 23 SEPTEMBER 2018

Programme Director,
The Executive Mayor of Polokwane, Councillor Tembi Simelane-Nkadimeng,
The Minister of Sports and Recreation, Mme Thokozile Xasa,
MECs from various provinces,
The District Mayor of Capricorn, Councillor John Mpe
The DG of SRSA, Alec Moemi
The Head of Department, Mr Phukuntsi,
The Chairperson of House of Traditional leaders and other traditional leaders,
Senior Officials,
The Sport confederation led by Mr. Moneri and other sport formations,
Councillors,
Distinguished guests.

- At the outset, I would like to thank the Executive Mayor of Polokwane for the warm welcome.
- It is with sadness that we hereby officially inform you of the sudden death of one of our athlete who was scheduled to compete at the 2018 National Indigenous Games from 23 - 28 September 2018.
- She is a female Ncuba Athlete from Giyani , Mopani District Municipality. She passed on yesterday after a very short illness. May Her Departed Soul Rest In Peace!
- Programme Director, The National Indigenous Games are taking place during the crucial heritage month under the theme ***The Year of Nelson Rolihlala Mandela: Advancing Transformation of South Africa's Heritage Landscape.***
- The indigenous games festival is significant because it promotes our rich and diverse culture as a people.

- It is a response to the reality that African culture is gradually eroding in our communities. These games are effectively rekindling our cultural heritage. We must reconnect with our authentic cultural roots and proud heritage.
- I feel privileged to welcome the Minister of Sport and Recreation; all MECs from various provinces our traditional leaders and other leaders of different sectors of society on this wonderful and inspiring occasion of the South African Indigenous Games Festival held in one of the largest townships in Limpopo Province, Seshego.
- We are only full of profound thanks to the Minister of Sport and Recreation for choosing Limpopo Province as the host for the National Indigenous Games.
- The decision is a well-considered one. Limpopo is home to diverse cultural experiences in which all the various categories of games are played in our communities. In our province, our people play morabaraba, diketo, Jukskei, Kgati, Drikoppies, Kho-kho, intonga. All of which have a great cultural effect. These games have evolved from our rich way of life and exciting that they have acquired a competitive status.
- Sports is a dynamic and multi-dimensional tool for social engineering and transformation. Through sports, we are able to attract tourists from the length and breadth of the country as we have done today. Our communities are kept strong, healthy and very happy.
- These games are intended to keep our youth and adults engaged and bring communities together. Our people will have an opportunity to network, nurture social bonds and enjoy inter-cultural learning.
- Our communities are still divided along racial and tribal lines. We, out of necessity, and in fostering social cohesion and national identity, have to once more condemn the ethnic utterances that were meted out during a football match. This rather unfortunate

incident would not find its way through our games. We are hosting nine provinces which would display a cultural medley never seen before. No ethnic or tribal utterances and or innuendos shall be condoned!

- On its own, this province is a confluence of cultures, bordering Botswana, Zimbabwe and Mozambique. It only confirms that had it not been the borders created through the Berlin Conference Africa would still have been borderless and the tribal and ethnic fault lines would have long been thwarted. Such a spirited campaign to partition Africa only benefitted the colonizers.
- Just a month ago I had the opportunity of leading a delegation to Namibia. And it's not coincidence that they danced like Batswana, Baswara(Khoi-San) right in the hinterlands of Namibia. We attended the Olufoko Cultural Festival where we witnessed a culture, a people that have the same ethos as ours.
- The food, the games being played, only affirms that we are one. Kgati is being played even in Botswana. In the USA, Kgati is known as a double dutch. It is as consequent of the people of the African diaspora that you would find Kgati in the USA, in Jamaica and amongst the people of Haiti.
- Musangwe, a bare knuckle fight or Mosako in Sotho, is even played in Uganda and Zimbabwe
- The local economy will also benefit from the presence of all our guests, tourists and athletes.
- Therefore, these games will certainly contribute to advancement of national building and social cohesion. Let us unite as South Africans and indeed all Africans on mother Africa!
-
- I have had the opportunity to witness the provincial games that were a curtain raiser for these national games at Peter Mokaba stadium. That moment was exciting and captivating. Armed with this advantage, I am not sure if the Minister will outsmart me in a game of morabaraba.
-
- I am certain that the spirit of the games and the sportsmanship will

be displayed today.

- Programme Director, we all know that sport has always brought South Africans together and organised our people to struggle for freedom and democracy.
 -
- This Indigenous Games Festival takes place in a month we commemorate the heroic deeds of our founding father Nelson Rolihlala Mandela, Mama Albertina Sisulu and Winnie Madikizela-Mandela.
- These revolutionaries contributed very much to the struggle for freedom and social development of our society.
- I would like to take this moment to assure the Minister and all our guests and spectators a memorable experience and warmth of the people of Limpopo. I wish all participants well. As Mike Singletary once said “do you know what my favorite part of the game is? The opportunity to play”. We are happy that you all came here to play.

Good luck! May the best teams win! I thank you all.