

RESPONSE TO THE DEBATE ON THE STATE OF THE PROVINCE ADDRESS BY THE PREMIER OF LIMPOPO, AMBASSADOR CHUPU MATHABATHA, HELD AT LEBOWAKGOMO LEGISLATIVE CHAMBER.

Madam Speaker;

Deputy Speaker;

Members of the Executive Council,

Chief-Whip of the Majority Party,

Honourable Members of the House,

Leaders of Political Parties,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me first and foremost; take this opportunity to thank all of you, honourable members of this esteemed House, for your participation in this debate.

The robustness, vibrancy and enthusiasm displayed in your engagement with SOPA are, indeed, encouraging.

Your inputs are truly enriching.

As the Provincial Executive Council, we place a higher premium on these inputs.

I am also confident that the people you represent would be pleased with how you seriously take your responsibilities. Keep up the good work.

Madam Speaker

I was also particularly impressed by the dignified manner with which the debate was conducted.

Honourable members have maintained the decorum of the House notwithstanding the inherent diverse political views.

This is very important because this Legislature is a critical instrument for the consolidation, deepening and advancement of our nascent democracy.

Madam Speaker;

This debate was preceded by a special occasion of the address to this House by our newly appointed Public Protector, Advocate Busisiwe Mkhwebane.

I therefore want to commend the House for the gesture extended to the Public Protector. This is in basic ethos of inter-governmental relations and cooperative governance.

In addition to the legislative mandate of her office, the Public Protector emphasized the significance of cooperation amongst various institutions of state.

She also mentioned the fact that there are a number of cases affecting our province that her office is currently seized with.

In this regard, I wish to join her commending those provincial departments and other institutions of the state in our province that are said be cooperating and working well with her office.

In particular, the Public Protector mentioned the Department of Mineral Resources, Government Pension Administration Adjudicator, and the Department of Roads and Transport. In her own words she said, “These are the most responsive and cooperating departments and entities”.

This is, indeed, how we should relate to and work with a Chapter 9 institution and all other entities of the state and government.

Sadly, the Public Protector mentioned the Department of Education, the Lepelle-Nkumpi Local Municipality, and this very

Legislature as being amongst those that do not fully cooperate with her Office.

This situation must be rectified; the Legislature in particular must lead by example. As government we will ensure that all provincial departments and municipalities cooperate with investigations by the Public Protector and implement her remedial actions without fear or favor.

Madam Speaker:

Coming to the debate, Honourable Sikhutji, alleged that we have not referred to or made mention of the **second phase of transition** in the state of the province address.

I wonder whether the honourable member understands what **the second phase of transition** is all about, and also whether he paid attention to the detail when we reported on the performance of the economy of the province and our plans going forward.

Perhaps we should start with a bit of a free political education so that we avoid using common sense on some of these critical matters.

During the struggle for freedom in this country, the ANC-led liberation movement identified the **National Oppression and Apartheid Colonialism** as the enemy of the people. The **1994 Democratic Breakthrough** marked the defeat and the end of this enemy.

Now, the new enemy of the people is **Poverty, Unemployment and Inequality**. And therefore this second phase of transition, as conceptualised by the ANC, is about defeating this new enemy, hence the emphasis on the **radical economic transformation**.

It is in this context that on Friday, during the State of the Province address, we said **we have entered a phase in our transition that requires decisive steps to help eradicate poverty, create jobs and reduce inequality**.

Limpopo Development Plan, LDP, seeks to achieve exactly that. It seeks to help build a **Developmental State** that is capable of leading efforts to overcome unemployment, poverty and inequality.

The Limpopo Development Plan further commits us to work in partnership with the private sector, organised labour and civil society, to create conditions for the acceleration of economic

growth and stimulation of job creation.

More importantly, the plan is anchored around:

- Institutionalising long-term planning, integration and coordination in order to drive industrialisation, manufacturing and infrastructure development programmes.
- The economic development of our rural communities, through agrarian and land reform,
- The expansion of the productive capacity of our local economy and creation of jobs,
- The expansion of health care infrastructure and provision of primary health care services,
- The provisioning of adequate human settlement and related basic services
- The provisioning of quality education and training
- The expansion on water infrastructure and sanitation in the far-flung areas and rural settlements of our province, and above all
- The fight against crime and corruption.

The main ideological thrust of the **second phase of transition** is meaningful shift in the **control, management and**

ownership patterns of the commanding heights of the economy

This is the essence of the **second phase of transition** honourable Sikhutji.

The details, in terms of the specific interventions we have made, including our plan going forward, will be outlined by MEC Seapiro Sekoati during the Budget Vote of the Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism.

Honourable Members of the House, Honourable Munyai in particular

We source our statistics from Statistics South Africa, the most credible institution the state relies upon for such information. I therefore do not know where the other statistics come from.

On the issue of employment creation and unemployment rate, let me, once more, quote StatsSA word-for-word;

“Limpopo Province is the second highest of the six provinces that continue to create employment during the current job market conditions. During the quarter ending in December 2016, additional 64 thousand jobs were created. Year-on-year change shows that 103 thousand people who were unemployed in the fourth quarter of 2015 secured employment by the fourth quarter of 2016. Jobs gained were mostly observed in Construction (39 000), Mining (33

000) and Agriculture (14 000), while big job losses were experienced in Community & Social Services (31 000). This brings the people in employment to 1.4 million by the end of 2016, up from 1.3 million at the close of 2015.

With the increase in employment, the rate of unemployment has also reduced to 19.3 percent in the fourth quarter of 2016 compared to 19.8 percent during the same period in 2015".

Honourable Munyai also questioned why we have based our statistics on the provision of basic services on the **2015 General Household Survey** instead of **2016 General Household Survey**. The answer is that there is no such a thing as the **2016 General Household Survey**; the latest survey was conducted in 2015.

Honourable members

It cannot also be true, as others would want us to believe, that this government has forgotten young people. During the State of the Province Address I announced, amongst others, that we have;

- Placed 3 298 young people on leanerships, internship and experiential training
- Set aside R17 MILLION for Artisan Development programme
- Spent R34.5 million on Air Traffic Controller Bursaries, and

- Also a continued support to Youth Owned businesses and cooperatives

As a matter of fact, even the multi-million Performance Theater we talked about will mainly benefit our young people in the art industry.

In the same vein, I would like to disagree with Honourable Smalle that our youth are a lost generation. The youth in this province are not lost.

It is for this reason that towards the conclusion of my speech I recognized and commended a number of young people who continue to excel in different fields.

I repeat, young people of Limpopo are not lost. They have already joined hands with the provincial government in preparation for the envisaged Youth Development Summit.

Honourable Members;

George Orwell would have shared the sentiments by Honourable Sebabi that as political leaders we must be seen to be consistent in our approach and actions.

For instance, we must all speak with the **same loud voice** against human rights violation irrespective of the racial profile or socio- economic status of the victim or the perpetrator.

Naturally, the senseless killing of Jan Railo who was said to have been mistaken for a wild animal by a farmer in Modimolle should have outraged all of us.

It should not be natural that some political parties would be outraged and for others it would be business as usual.

Madam Speaker;

I wish to reiterate the words I used at the conclusion of the State of the Province Address last week.

We must work together and unite for the good of our province and her people.

We must master the art to subject our personal ambitions and aspirations to the broader ambitions of the people as a whole.

In honour and memory of Oliver Tambo, we must make Limpopo a better place to live in.

I thank you!