

**ADDRESS BY THE PREMIER OF LIMPOPO, MR CHUPU
MATHABATHA ON THE OCCASION OF THE OPENING OF
LIMPOPO HOUSE OF TRADITIONAL LEADERS, LEPHALALE
MUNICIPALITY, MARAPONG STADIUM**

22 April 2016

Your Majesties and Royal Highnesses—our Kings;

MEC for Cooperative Governance, Human Settlement and
Traditional Affairs,

Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson and Members of the Provincial
House of Traditional Leaders,

Chairpersons and members of the Local Houses of Traditional
Leaders in Limpopo,

Leaders of Provincial Houses of Traditional Leaders from other
Provinces,

Leadership of CONTRALESA led by Kgoshi Setlamorago
Thobejane,

Provincial Leadership of SALGA,

Executive Mayors and Mayors present,

Distinguished guests,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Avuxeni bo ndavezitha!

Ndaa mahosi ashu!

Thobela magoši a ka!

Next week Wednesday, the 27th of April, South Africans in the country, in Diaspora and all over the world will be celebrating **22 years of democracy and freedom** in our country.

The Cabinet under the leadership of President Jacob Zuma has decided that this year, the national celebrations should be organized and held in Limpopo. What a rare honour and a privilege for the people of this province.

We have since chosen the District of Mopani to host this important event on our political calendar. I am therefore formally inviting ***magoši a rena*** to join the President and the masses of our people in Giyani when they celebrate not only democracy and freedom, but the milestone achievements we have made in creating a better life for all.

It is also worth mentioning that this will be the first national celebration since 1994 to be held outside Pretoria.

For this reason, we must go all out and mobilize our people to come in their numbers. We must show course why we are the hosts. We dare not disappoint.

Chairperson

The President has just announced the **03rd of August 2016** as the day of local government elections.

Local government is a very important sphere of government that is at the coalface of service delivery. And it is in this context, that we must strengthen local government through popular participation of our people.

Similarly, the participation of traditional leaders in local governance is very critical. It adds the necessary and required value to the socio-economic developmental agenda of our government.

There is no doubt that we have succeeded and continue to make the necessary inroads in improving the conditions of living of our people, becomes amongst us we have traditional leaders.

Magoši a ka, we have come this far working together with you at this level of government, and I believe united in action we can do more. We can make local government become more sensitive and responsive to the needs and aspirations of the people it serves.

The ANC government needs you. Our people need you more than ever before.

Program Director, Your Majesties;

Chapter 12 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa enjoins this democratic government to recognize and support the institution of traditional leadership.

On the other hand, the Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Act of 2003, provides a mechanism for this support and, more importantly, the role of traditional leaders in society, and above all, the type and form of relationship between government and the traditional leaders.

It is in this context that this Annual Opening of the Limpopo House of Traditional Leaders becomes an important event. It gives us a platform to assess the progress we have made in carrying out our constitutional mandate. In the process, especially during the subsequent debate of this annual address, we must identify the challenges we are still faced, and come up with mechanisms through which we can deal with these challenges.

Chairperson;

Two years ago, I proposed that as a measure of building leadership and management capacity for our traditional leaders, we may need to revive the School of Traditional leadership – commonly known as **Boaparankwe**.

To that effect, I invited that House to explore such a possibility within the confines of the established legislations, availability of resources and advise accordingly.

Nevertheless I am happy to see some work being in this regard. No less than (30) thirty members of this house have been trained by Local Government SETA in collaboration with the University of Pretoria for a period of six months in 2015.

The training was strategically tailored in, Strategic and Operational Management, Program and Projects Management, Public Financial Management, Service Delivery and Problem solving.

It is also my pleasure to announce that Anglo Platinum has appointed the Development Bank of Southern Africa to train all **183** Senior Traditional Leaders in the Province on a programme called ***Visionary Leaders***. To date 43 Senior Traditional Leaders have been trained and we are looking forward to others being trained in the near future.

Kgoši Setlamorago Thobejane, Ngwato a' Bauba, will agree with me that the current dispensation has got huge implications on the institution of traditional leadership. Those deployed in Parliament and Provincial legislatures, would know that a lot of continuous training and education is required in order to comprehend the complexities of today's world.

Your Majesties and Royal Highnesses;

I am also glad to announce to this House that we have put aside a substantial budget in this financial year to assist traditional leaders.

As I said during the state of the province address, we have for the first time allocated a budget to the tune of R5million for our Kings to discharge their responsibilities.

We have also decided that all headmen and women in the **Status Quo report** who have not being receiving their salaries must be compensated. In this regard, we call on all Senior Traditional leaders to submit the names of the affected headmen/women so that they could be included in the **PERSAL system** of government. We are now ready to pay.

In the same vein the President has, as per Proclamation No.326 of 17 March 2016, approved that the salaries of all categories of Traditional leaders be increased with effect from 01 April 2016.

This salary adjustment has also affected salaries of the Chairperson of the House of Traditional Leaders, his Deputy, and allowances for part time members of the Provincial House of Traditional leaders.

The challenge however is that the Commission for the Remuneration of Salaries for Public Office Bearers has not determined the benefits that Members of the Local Houses qualify for. To that effect the submission has been made by the Provincial House to the Secretariat of the Commission.

On the other hand, the funeral assistance for Senior Traditional leaders has also been increased from **R20 000** to **R50 000** with effect from July 2015. This will obviously go a long towards assisting the affected traditional authorities and communities during the time of bereavement.

Chairperson, we are also hard at work to source funding for the establishment of the long overdue traditional councils. These councils must be established because they will help maximize community involvement in matters of traditional governance and development in general.

It is my pleasure to also announce to this House that our promise to purchase vehicles for traditional leaders has finally been fulfilled. I saw the majority of you this morning driving in modern comfortable cars of class. Please look after them. Those who have not yet received theirs, will surely get them before the end of June this year.

Chairperson;

In my visits to several traditional authority offices, I have been appraised, and also observed the dire need of infrastructure development.

We have since started and completed several traditional authority offices across the Province.

We have handed over some of these newly completed traditional authority offices, and in the next few weeks will be handing over the ones for Kgoši Sekororo and Kgoši Moloto. This programme is ongoing. We want all our traditional leaders to work in a conducive environment. My concern however, is that they are not fully furnished and are without access roads. MEC Makhurupetje and Mayors, let's attend to this aspect as a matter of urgency.

Chairperson

I also reported during the state of the province address earlier this year that we have extended the term of office of Kgatla Commission on Traditional Leadership Disputes and Claims. This will help the Commission to deal with the remaining claims and disputes.

The commission has done well under the circumstances and I believe by the end of their extended term they would have covered enough ground.

We have however noted with dismay a trend where affected traditional leaders write threatening letters to the Premier to resolve their cases, or appoint so and so or else. I wish to call on our leaders to desist from such an act because a commission has been appointed for this purpose. The trend of entitlement where we even club up certain members of the community to rally around us and destabilize the governance of municipalities and our communities will not help us at the end.

We must instead cooperate with the commission in doing its work. I also urge the parties involved, to accept both the findings of the Commission and the subsequent determination of the Premier. Otherwise we will have perpetual instability in our communities and we cannot afford this. The sooner we become stable the better, for stability is the prerequisite for development.

In the same vein, it is also important to once more emphasize what we have always said in the past, that issues of **bogoshi** are best understood and resolved by **magoshi** themselves. I thought I should say this again, because the President was quoted out of context when he mentioned this point in his address to the National House of Traditional leadership a week ago. It was obviously disingenuous for that journalist to report that the President was saying the courts have no role to play in traditional leadership matters.

We who are seated here know for the fact that ways of doing things, in the context of our tradition and culture, are best understood within the institution itself. The legal system of our country is not based on the African culture and tradition. It derives its origin from the Roman-Dutch law. We therefore urge you to opt for your own traditional councils, ***bakgoma le bakgomana, including dikgadi tša mošate***, to resolve and deal with disputes and related issues, before you go to the modern courts of law. The courts of law must be the last resort.

Chairperson and your Majesties

I wish to welcome the proclamation by President Jacob Zuma on the Queenship of the Balobedu.

This recognition and the status of Queenship is a positive development in the history of our traditional leadership in the continent. It is an act of self affirmation on our part as Africans.

It is also worth mentioning that once announced, this will be the only recognized Queen in the whole continent of Africa.

Your Majesties and Royal Highnesses,

The application for the 2016 initiation Schools period has closed on 15 April 2016. Government is therefore encouraging all Senior Traditional leaders who did not apply to conduct initiation schools during this period NOT to conduct any illegal initiation school.

These also include other members of the community who from time to time conduct illegal initiation schools.

We will be working closely with the Police and the Department of Health to make sure there is a death-free initiation period this year. As you have done before, we are looking forward to working with you to achieve this target.

Lastly your Majesties and Royal Highnesses;

The leadership of the House is in the last year of its term of office. I would therefore like to take this opportunity to express, on my own behalf and on behalf of the Executive Council, sincere words

of gratitude to Kgoshi Dikgale, the Chairperson of the House, your Deputy Chairperson, Hosi Chauke and the entire Executive Committee for the good work done.

You have worked well with this government throughout your term of office. You were always there when the government needed you.

Your advices and guidance came in handy whenever we had to deal with issues relating to tradition and culture.

You are a true epitome of the exemplary working relationship between government and the institution of traditional leadership.

We trust that your successors will emulate your good examples and build on the solid foundation you have laid so far.

Tsela tšhweu ba mošate!

Pula!