

ADDRESS BY THE MEC FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT, MME NKAKARENG RAKGOALE ON BEHALF OF THE PREMIER OF LIMPOPO, AMBASSADOR, CHUPU MATHABATHA ON THE OCCASION OF THE INTERNATIONAL NELSON MANDELA DAY HELD AT HAROLD RHUDZANI PRIMARY SCHOOL IN VHEMBE.

18 July 2019

Programme Director;
Executive Mayor of Vhembe District Municipality,
Mayor of Makhado Local Municipality, Cllr Munyai;
All Councillors present today;
The Principal and Members of the School Governing Body;
Members of the media;
Distinguished ladies and gentlemen:

Ndi matsheni vhatu vhothe.

Ri khou livhuwa vhoda u pembela na rine nga duvha heli.

I am very happy to be with you today to celebrate this important International Mandela Day.

The Nelson Mandela Day is an important day for the whole world. This day celebrate the birthday of our first President of a free and democtraic South Africa. All progressive countries of the world are celebrating this day with us today. For us as South Africans this day is even more important because it honours and celebrate one of our own; our former president, the late, Dr. Nelson Mandela. We are very privileged that the whole world takes time to celebrate a man who was born in this country.

As South Africans we have always celebrated Nelson Mandela's birthday because it is an important day for us.

The World joins us in these celebrations when the United Nations General Assembly declared the 18 of July as the Nelson Mandela International Day. This declaration was made in November of 2009.

We regard this declaration as a special tribute in recognition of former President Nelson Mandela's contribution to the culture of peace and freedom across the world.

According to the United Nations, this unique honor was also to recognize President Nelson Mandela's values and his dedication to the service of humanity. President Nelson Mandela is revered across the world as an icon in the fields of

conflict resolution, reconciliation, gender equality and the rights of children, as well as the upliftment of poor and underdeveloped communities.

He is our hero and our icon. We love Nelson Mandela because he loved all of us, young and old.

However, we know that President Nelson Mandela had a special love for the children because he regarded them as the future of our country and the future of the world.

President Mandela was the champion for youth development. He believed that we should make deliberate efforts to open doors for the youth so that they can realise their full potential.

He was inspired by smiles on the faces of the children.

It is for this reason that Mandela's government introduced free education so that no child can be denied education because of poverty.

In his own words, President Mandela said that education is the greatest engine for personal development –he said that education is the greatest weapon to fight poverty and underdevelopment.

We therefore continue to urge all of you to remain in school until you get your degrees. This is what Mandela would have loved to see.

As young people you must disassociate yourselves from things that will deny you the opportunity to focus on your education.

Part of the things you must distance yourselves from is the abuse of alcohol and drugs.

These are the things that will make it impossible for you to focus on your studies. Drugs and alcohol will also lead you to be in trouble with the law.

Nelson Mandela would not love to see you in jail. Nelson Mandela would love to see you graduate from a university and making something of your lives.

He would love to see you as Doctors, Engineers, accountants and lawyers –not nyaope addicts or criminals who are locked behind bars.

Nelson Mandela would have loved to see young people making education fashionable.

On this important day, we want to urge our youth to take up the opportunities which are availed by our freedom and democracy.

These include the opportunities of education and training.

Today because of the sacrifices of Nelson Mandela and his generation, there are no limits to what our youth can achieve. We say to our young people that if you can dream it, you can achieve it. The government is there to support your dreams and aspirations.

This government continues to honor the memory and legacy of Nelson Mandela by making education accessible to young people.

The ANC government has declared education as one of its apex priorities. We believe, as Nelson Mandela did, that education remains a vital key to unlocking opportunities for the future. Educating and training young minds is an investment into the future of our province and our country.

It is for this reason that the ANC government has taken practical measures to increase access to education, particularly basic education.

As we speak, our school feeding scheme program feeds thousands of learners in over 3 璫 public schools.

We are also providing Scholar Transport Programme to learners in almost 380 schools.

In this current financial year, the number of learners benefitting from the No-Fee School Policy is a little above 1.6 million.

We are doing all of these to ensure that Nelson Mandela's dream of universal access to education is realized.

Programme Director;

President Nelson Mandela has left us an inheritance of racial harmony, promotion and protection of human rights, gender equality and the rights of the children and as well as the upliftment of the poor and underdeveloped communities.

Let us continue each day to be inspired by his lifelong example and his call to never stop working for a better world.

We all can take action that can inspire positive change.

It does not matter how small your contribution is; all contribution can make a change and cement a Nelson Mandela smile on the face of someone. What we need to remember is that President Mandela spent 67 years of his adult life devoted to the service of humanity.

He did this as a human rights lawyer, a prisoner of conscience, an international peacemaker and the first democratically elected president of a free South Africa. All what we need from you is 67 minutes of your time.

Programme Director;

In conclusion, let me reiterate the message that we all can be like Madiba. There is a seed of generosity in all of us.

Let us continue to be each other's keeper; show the world that we are worthy to be the heirs of the great Mandela legacy.

Once again, on behalf of our Premier, Ntate Chupu Mathabatha I wish you a fruitful International Mandela Day.

Ndo livhuwa!
Aa!!