

**ADDRESS BY THE PREMIER OF LIMPOPO, MR CHUPU MATHABATHA ON THE OCCASION OF THE LIMPOPO DEVELOPMENT SUMMIT HELD AT THE RANCH HOTEL, POLOKWNAE.**

31 January 2017

Programme Director;

Minister of COGTA, Honourable Des Van Rooyen;  
Minister of Water and Sanitation, Honourable Nomvula Mokonyane;

Minister of Energy, Honourable JoeMat-Petterson;

MEC for CoGHSTA, Mme Makoma Makhurupetje;  
Other MECs present;

Executive Mayors and Mayors of our municipalities;  
Chairperson of SALGA, Cllr Thembi Nkadimeng;  
Chairperson of the Limpopo House of Traditional Leaders,  
Kgoshi Dikgale;

Our newly appointed Director General, Ntate Nape Nchabeleng;

Acting HOD for CoGHSTA and all senior government officials present here;

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Thank you very much for honouring our invitation to this very important Provincial Local Government Summit.

In particular, I wish to appreciate the presence of our ministers who have come to share with us particular experiences and offer necessary guidance and support.

We truly are humbled by your presence – indeed your presence and presentations will definitely enrich the content of this summit.

Your presentations will help provide us with an eagle's view of our position as it relates to the back-to-basics targets, our position as it relates to the delivery of basic services such as electricity, water and sanitation.

We are indeed humbled by the knowledge that despite your hectic schedules, you are never too busy for Limpopo.

Although my task is to officially welcome you, I know that you do not need welcome in Limpopo, because this is your home.

**Programme Director;**

As you know, this summit comes less than 6 months after the last local government elections.

These elections were preceded by the decision of the Municipal Demarcation Board to re-determine boundaries for various municipal in the province.

As a result of this decision some of our local municipalities were amalgamated whilst others were completely disestablished.

In Capricorn Aganang Local Municipality was disestablished; in Vhembe Mutale Local Municipality was disestablished.

In Waterberg District Mookgophong and Modimolle Local municipalities were amalgamated. In Sekhukhune District Fetakgomo and Tubatse Local Municipalities were also amalgamated.

We now have 22 local municipalities from the 25 we had before this process of amalgamation and disestablishment.

I can say that our people have been very welcoming to this process. We did not have any resistance from the people of Aganang, Tubatse, Fetakgomo, Mookgophong and Modimolle.

However, there has been serious resistance from sections of our people in the Vuwani area against the decision to incorporate the area into the newly established municipality known for now as Lim 345.

This resistance has led to regrettable incidences of destruction of private and public property including the sad episodes of disruption of schooling in the area.

About 15 villages were affected by this disruption. In the process 26 schools were damaged, 11 of which were totally burned down and the remaining 15 partially damaged.

These destructions have cost us millions of Rands.

We have condemned this behaviour and we hope that those who have been arrested are convicted and sentenced appropriately.

We also wish to call on all of you as local government practitioners, particularly as councillors to help your communities realise the worth of education.

Councillors should not be seen at the forefront of anarchy and destruction of the same infrastructure they are meant to develop and maintain.

This does not mean that you should be divorced from community activism – it simply means that you should at all times provide leadership.

**Programme Director;**

We have organised this summit so that we could provide a platform to communicate about the state of our municipalities and share best practices relating to municipal governance and performance.

The second and very important objective for this summit is to set the agenda for the current term of local government. This should assist us to accelerate service delivery to our communities and restore people's confidence in local government.

The third motivation behind this summit is to provide a platform for dialogue on intergovernmental responsibilities in order to improve the performance of municipalities.

We call on all of you as participants in this summit to give us your best so that we can emerge out of this summit with the best and more workable resolutions and solutions.

**Programme Director;**

Indeed, the significance of this summit cannot be over-emphasised.

This is evidenced by our carefully crafted theme which says; ***building a developmental local government by getting the basics right.***

This is not a very sophisticated theme, it is the most simplest which however carries a very important message.

This is a message that directs all of us to go back to the basics and get things right in this important sphere of governance.

The end result of getting our basics right will be improved delivery of quality services to our communities.

Getting basics right means that our local authorities will be well positioned and capacitated to deliver clean drinking water, decent sanitation, electricity, shelter, timeous waste removal and quality roads.

The basics that we must get right include:

- Filling of vacancies in strategic positions with qualified and skilled personnel,
- Improving expenditure on capital and maintenance budgets,
- Improving integrated planning, infrastructure delivery and promoting economic development,
- Promoting good governance and accountability,

- Strengthening the relationship between the institution of traditional leadership and municipalities, and
- Democratizing governance by putting people and their concerns first.

Getting the basics right should also mean that we must improve the image of Local Government. To achieve this does not need the services of a PR company or something like that.

It simply means that we must be seen by communities to be doing the right thing.

Example of this is clean governance – our municipalities must improve their audit outcomes.

The one thing we should never tolerate is a disclaimer audit opinion. Nothing undermines our people like a disclaimer audit opinion.

It can never, and should never be accepted that any municipal entity can simply fail or refuse to submit books to the Auditor General.

It is this type of behaviour that makes our people to lose confidence in those that they have elected to represent them.

There should be serious consequence against all senior official and councillors of a municipality that gets a disclaimer from the AG.

## **Programme Director;**

My task was not to render a keynote address but to welcome you to this all-important gathering. I have got no doubt that you already feel welcome and at home.

Let me conclude by re-inviting all of you to take the business of this summit seriously. The people of this province have high and very legitimate expectations from this gathering.

They would be disappointed if we were to reduce this gathering to a mere talk shop.

Our people expect us to come out of this summit with sound and solid resolutions which will help us unblock the identified service delivery bottlenecks.

Once again, I wish you honest and frank deliberations throughout the business of this summit.

I thank you!