

KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY THE PREMIER OF LIMPOPO, MR. CHUPU STANLEY
MATHABATHA ON THE OCCASION OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS DAY
COMMEMORATION 2022.

21 April 2022

Programme Director
Members of Executive Council;
Members of the provincial Legislature;
Executive Mayor of Capricorn District Municipality;
Executive Mayor of Polokwane Local Municipality;
Leaders of various political parties;
Our Esteemed Traditional Leaders;
Representative of the Human Rights Commission;
Friends from the Media;
The people of Limpopo:

It is a great honour and privilege to participate at this commemoration which has a great historical meaning to all of us. Human Rights Day 2022 is indeed a day for society to reflect and make an honest assessment.

Like we did last year in 2021, we are yet again forced to commemorate this day under what is commonly known as the New Normal.

Covid-19 continues to impact on the traditional way we commemorate and celebrate historic days such as today. However, we have learnt to accept that protection of human lives is human rights.

We are saying this because with the limitations and restrictions imposed upon our freedoms and the way we do things, we are protecting lives.

We therefore take this opportune moment to reiterate the message that covid-19 pandemic is still with us. Therefore it is still very critical that we continue to adhere to all the health protocols put in place to prevent ourselves against infections.

As part of celebrating human rights day, we are mindful of the fact that as Limpopo, we continue to successful fight against coronavirus.

We are highly motivated by the low numbers of people who are currently being infected with this virus. In the same wavelength, we continue to draw some inspiration from the positive response with regard to vaccination.

Today, we want to reiterate government's clarion call that as we strive towards reaching herd / population immunity, people need to go out in their numbers and get vaccinated.

In particular, our humble appeal goes to young people who are the future of our country, to rise and get vaccinated.

Currently, science confirms that vaccines have proven to be the only best mechanism of preventing against hospitalization and death caused by coronavirus.

Programme Director

Human Rights Day is a national day that is commemorated annually on 21st March to remind South Africans, about the sacrifices which were made for us to attain the freedom and democracy we are enjoying.

This day provides us as a country with an opportunity to reflect on progress made in the promotion and protection of human rights.

This year we commemorate Human Rights month under the theme: “The Year of Unity and Renewal: Protecting and Preserving our Human Rights Gains”.

This year, we urge people to use this day to remember and honour those who made it possible for us to achieve freedom and democracy.

They include courageous men and women who marched in Sharpville and Langa on the 21 March 1960, for the total abolition of the pass laws.

The Sharpville massacre and Langa march exposed the brutality of the apartheid for the whole world to see and also united our people’s unyielding resolve for freedom. We celebrate these historic milestones in honour of the sacrifices made by our heroes and heroines of the liberation struggle. Through their bravery at that time, the international community was able to pressurise the then apartheid regime to introduce reforms in our country.

Hence it is very important that when we celebrate days like this one, we should appreciate and honour human rights as enshrined in the constitution of the Republic of South Africa.

All of us are expected to promote respect of basic human rights and ensure the restoration of human dignity in line with the Bill of Rights.

The Bill of Rights ensures that everyone is equal before the law, has the right to equal protection, the right to freedom of movement, to use their language, and right to cultural practices.

Programme Facilitator

I am very much pleased that today, government has made significant and remarkable strides, with regard to addressing socio-economic rights.

Today, majority of South Africans are enjoying rights such as housing, water, education, social grants, health care, and government continues to acknowledge that more still need to be done.

For the past twenty seven years of democracy and freedom as South Africans and the people of Limpopo, we are successfully ensuring that we work together to address the legacy of our divided past.

We are working together to build a country that is envisaged in the National Development Plan and to build a Limpopo that we all want, as stipulated in the Limpopo Development Plan.

As we recall the founding principles of our freedom, we are reminded to always embrace a country which belong to all who live in it, especially women and children.

We are saying the above mainly because, recently our country has been forced into a second pandemic called: Gender Based Violence and Femicide. Today, we reiterate our call for a coordinated societal effort towards a total fight against women and children abuse.

This Human Rights Day will not have achieved its intended goals if our women and children still live in fear. Their fear translate into violation of their human rights and as society, we have to stop the talk and act against the pandemic of gender based violence and femicide.

Programme Director

In the same wavelength, we need to redouble our efforts in the fight against racism in our country.

Among the many hindrances caused by racism, is a threat to our democracy as a barrier towards the transformation agenda. It also weakens the fabric of our society and erodes the trust and the optimism on which economic growth depends. Working together we can confront racism and move our country towards non-racial, non-sexist, free society in which everybody enjoy human rights.

South Africa belongs to all who live in it. So said our forebears like: the late Peter Mampogwane Nchabeleng, John Kgwana Nkadimeng, Ramphelane Mampuru, Mark Shope, Mohumagadi Madinoge, Collins Chabane, Norman Mashabane, Comrade Tambusa, Mama Thalitha Mokgadi Lebea-Mampuru, and all other unsung heroes and heroines of our liberation struggle. We salute and dip our revolutionary banners for them.

Programme Facilitator

Please allow me to conclude by wishing the people of Limpopo a historic and development orientated Human Rights Day.

I thank you!
Inkomu!
Nda!
Kea Leboga!
Dankie!