

**ADDRESS BY THE PREMIER OF LIMPOPO, MR CHUPU STANLEY MATHABATHA ON THE OCCASION OF THE PROVINCIAL FREEDOM DAY CELEBRATIONS, HELD AT MANGANENG VILLAGE MAKHUDUTHAMAGA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY.**

27 April 2022.

Programme Director, our MEC for Sport, Art and Culture, Mme Thandi Moraka;

Mong-mabu, Kgoshi Wilson Nkadimeng Ramphelane III;

All MECs present here;

Members of the provincial Legislature;

Executive Mayors and Mayor's of our Municipalities;

Executive Mayor of Sekhukhune District, Cllr. Julia Mathebe;

Mayor of Makhuduthamaga Municipality, Cllr. Minah Bahula;

All councillors present today;

Our Esteemed Traditional Leaders present here today;

Members of the media;

Distinguished Guests;

Sechaba sa Manganeng le metse mabapi;

The people of Limpopo:

Good morning! Thobela!

I greet you in the name of freedom, democracy, peace and prosperity.

Thank you very much for responding in such large numbers to this freedom day celebrations.

Today is an important day in our country, this day has been set aside as our National Freedom Day.

Today we celebrate 28 years of our democracy and freedom.

We are here to commemorate the first democratic elections in this country which were held on the 27 of April in 1994.

In the last two years, we have not been able to celebrate this important day in this fashion because of the restriction of Covid-19 pandemic.

We have not been able to gather in these large numbers because we had Covid-19 to defeat.

Through the leadership of President Ramaphosa and our collective actions, we have been able to bring Covid-19 cases under control.

We mourn the many lives which have been lost to Covid-19;

We have lost family members, relatives and neighbours to this deadly pandemic.

We have also lost leaders, including traditional leaders who have succumbed to Covid-19.

The truth, which we all should know, is that the most effective protection against Covid-19 is vaccination.

Those who doubted the safety of our vaccines should be knowing by now, that vaccines are safe and reliable.

So far, thousands of people in our province have been vaccinated.

This has helps us to fight the infections and to save lives.

However, there are people who are still getting sick and dying from Covid-19 – these are mostly the people who are not vaccinated.

I want to urge everyone who has not yet been vaccinated to be vaccinated. Do it for your children and for your family.

We must not forget that the Freedom Day we are celebrating today, came with important rights such as the right to good health.

This progressive ANC government is ensuring that your right to good health is protected by ensuring free access to these life saving vaccines.

The South African government is one of the few governments on the African continent that ensured sufficient supply of these vaccines for its people.

We have enough vaccine doses to administer to anyone who wishes to protect himself or herself against this killer virus.

Recently, stadiums and other places of entertainment, including some churches have opened their doors, for supporters and worshipers.

To gain access to these stadiums and other churches, you need to be fully vaccinated.

Let us go out and get our vaccines.

## **Programme Director**

Twenty eight years ago, we abolished apartheid and ushered in our new democracy.

On this day 28 years ago, the people of this country elected Nelson Rolihlala Mandela as the first Black President of South Africa.

On this day we remember that apartheid was a very evil and brutal system which did not recognise black people as equal citizens.

Apartheid government introduced many laws which made the life of a black person painful and difficult to live.

Black children were only given the education which prepared them to work as servants of their white counterparts.

This type of education was known as Bantu education.

When young people protested and rejected Bantu education, the apartheid government responded by sending the police to shoot and kill them.

One of the youngest victims who were killed by apartheid police for rejecting Bantu education was the 11 year old Hector Peterson.

Bantu education was designed to ensure that black children do not get the opportunities to be trained as medical specialists, scientists, accountants and other important professions.

The apartheid government wanted our kids to go to school only to be trained how to become a good garden boy or an effective kitchen girl.

In 1994, through President Mandela we said we were going to change things and they said we could not change a thing.

We said that we would create an equal education which would be accessible for all, they said it was impossible.

Today as we speak there is no longer education for the white people and education for the black people; we have one single education system.

## Programme Director

In the past, only those who came from rich families were able to go to universities and colleges. Today that is a thing of the past.

The government has ensured that each child who is working hard is able to access university or college education.

Even those who come from the poorest families are able to go to the university because we have a government that cares.

In this province, the government has opened TVET Colleges in every region. Those who come from poor families receive free education in these colleges.

Our School Nutrition Programme, Scholar Transport and the No-Fee School policies remain amongst the best interventions by this ANC government.

To date, the Feeding Scheme programme in our schools feeds thousands of learners in almost 4 000 public schools.

Through this feeding scheme, we have ensured that children do not miss school days simply because they do not have anything to eat at school.

This can only be done by a caring government.

Because of this freedom and democracy we have able to introduce the Scholar Transport Programme in our schools.

This programme benefits learners in almost 380 schools. These are indeed the fruits of the freedom we are celebrating today.

It does not end there, this democratic government has introduced a No-Fee School Policy to ensure that children from poor families don't have to pay school fees. Today in Limpopo, over **1.6 Million** children do not pay school fees.

This is what democracy has brought to the people of Limpopo.

Programme Director

Whenever we took over in 1994, we said that we would build an economy which would work for everyone – they said we were not going to be able to run the economy.

For many of our people, the struggle for freedom and democracy was also a struggle for access to basic services.

You know that in the past, piped water, electricity and tarred roads were things of the cities.

Black people in rural villages were not considered for these basic services.

Today as we speak Limpopo is no longer a dark province, there is electricity almost everywhere.

In 1994 there were only about 30% of houses which had electricity.

Today as we speak, almost 95% of houses in this province are connected to electricity. This is a massive development which should be celebrated.

In the coming five years the government will focus more attention and resources on ensuring that our people enjoy uninterrupted access to clean potable water.

We have already spent millions of rands on water infrastructure. What is going to happen now is that we are going to ensure that the available infrastructure takes water to the homes of our people.

When President Mandela said that this ANC government was going to build houses for the poor, we were told that such a dream was not realisable.

Today I am proud to tell you that each year, this ANC government is building thousands of houses for the poor. There is no any other government in the world that is able to do this, only the ANC government is doing it because we are a caring government.

These are the fruits of freedom nourished by the blood of our freedom fighters like Solomon Kalushi Mahlangu and others.



## **Programme Director**

On this day, we also celebrate the protection and advancement of human rights which are entrenched in our constitution.

We celebrate the right to freedom of movement and association, freedom of expression, religious freedom, freedom of sexual orientation and the right to own property.

We celebrate the rights of workers to belong to a trade union, equal pay for equal work, health and safety at work and the right to strike.

Our Affirmative Action Policies have ensured that women take their rightful place in society as equal citizens before the law.

There is no doubt that the past 28 years have restored the dignity of women.

We have indeed travelled a long road since 1994. We have covered much ground.

We have built schools and hospitals. We have constructed bridges, dams and world-class power stations.

Even at the face of the many challenges we have as a nation, we know that our future is in good hands and that the future is indeed bright.

Let all of us be the defenders of our freedom and democracy. Let no one and nothing to reserve the gains of our freedom.

## **Programme Director**

Let us continue to celebrate our freedom and democracy with the knowledge that our freedom was not free. Our democracy did not come cheap.

People were killed, imprisoned and exiled for us to be free. We must never take our freedom for granted.

Let us continue to be united, work together in the building of our country.

It is in our hands to make Limpopo and South Africa a place for our dreams.

Let us join hands to fight corruption, both in government and in the private sector.

Let us fight against the proliferation of drugs in our communities.

Let us build the South Africa we want.

'Ke tsea sebaka se ke lebogetse lehono ge rele mo nageng ya Kgosi Nkadimeng.

Re gopole bagale ba rena ba ntwana ya tokologo go swana le John Kgwana Nkadimeng, Lawrence 'Bra Phoks' Phokanoka, Phakane Moretsele, Peter Mampogwane Nchabeleng, Jaq Squirrel Mashegoane, Mohumagadi Madinoge, le ka moka ba nka se babaleng kaba fetsa. Kara masole a ntwana ya tokologo.

Lehono re tlile go dumedisa ditlogolo ke ditlogolwana tsa Lekgotla la 1958 Sebatakgomo Uprising.

Lehono re gopotse masole a rena a Fetakgomo o Sware motho.

Lehono re ikgantsha Ka ntwana ya marumo ya bo Kgosi Sekhukhune, Kgosi Mampuru, Kgosi Nyabela, le magoshi ka moka ao a lwetsego tokologo.

Setshaba sa Thulare, ntumeleleng kere moshuthelelwa gaa nabe.

Moletse Sekuba and I thank you!