

Building and maintaining quality roads, a priority for Limpopo Government –  
Speech by the Premier of Limpopo Province During the Signing of Strategic  
Partnership Agreement Between RAL and Municipalities - 07 April 2022, Fusion  
Boutique Hotel, Polokwane.

Deputy Minister of the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional  
Affairs (COGTA), Ms Thembi Nkadimeng;  
MEC for Limpopo Department of Public Works, Roads and Infrastructure, Dr  
Namane Dickson Masemola (Gobetse);  
MEC for Provincial Treasury, Mr Seaparo Sekoati, Hlabirwa;  
Chairperson of Roads Agency Limpopo Board of Directors, Mr Matome Ralebipi;  
Executive Mayor of Capricorn District Municipality, Cllr Mamedupi Teffo  
(Mothokwa);  
Executive Mayor of Polokwane Municipality, Cllr John Mpe (Kgomo);  
Mayor of Mogalakwena Municipality, Cllr Ngoako Taueatsoala;  
Esteemed traditional leaders amongst us;  
Heads of Departments;  
CEOs;  
Members of the media;  
Ladies and Gentlemen:

Programme Director

Today is one of the most notable day in the history of South Africa. Over 150 years  
ago a bright star of Africa was born in a small village in Botlokwa, Mama Charlotte  
Makgomo (Mannya) Maxeke, born on 07 April 1871.

It was just last year that as people of South Africa we had the privilege of honouring  
this daughter of the soil by dedicating the whole year to her, honouring her at 150  
years.

What we learned from Mama Maxeke is the relentless pursuit for a better life for  
Africans, a pioneering spirit that continues to inspire us many years after she has  
departed. She died long before we realised our dream of freedom that we shall  
celebrate at the end of this month.

Programme Director

I return to the heroism of Mama Charlotte Maxeke today because we have learnt  
from her that even when conditions are not favourable we should not give up on  
creating environment that will allow us to succeed.

We should not give up building dreams that shall live long after we are gone. It is  
that dream of an emancipated society, of a gravel road turned into tar, of  
inaccessible places getting a face, it is that dream of a new world that we continue to  
pursue for the betterment of the lives of our people.

When the apartheid government killed Kalushi Solomon Mahlangu on 06 April 1979 it was his fighting spirit that said: “my blood will nourish the tree that will bear the fruits of freedom, Aluta Continua.”

We are here today to witness that tree of freedom that his blood and the fighting spirit of Mama Charlotte Maxeke have nourished. We are indeed walking in the shadow of greatness, we dare not fail.

Programme Director

I am delighted to have been invited here today in this event marking a turn-around in the manner we approach infrastructure development, especially how we tackle challenges of developing Limpopo roads from the state they are in to more accessible and usable ones.

Equally, we need to work tirelessly to maintain the infrastructure that we have in our various towns and villages.

Earlier in February 2022 as I was presenting the State of the Province Address, I emphasised that building new roads and maintaining existing road infrastructure is a mandate bestowed on Roads Agency Limpopo, given the crucial role roads play in economic growth and development.

I then noted how good roads play an important role in the reliable transportation of people and goods in the province and beyond, further highlighting that, through RAL, we continue to build quality roads that make the lives of our communities better.

We continue to commend RAL for building quality road infrastructure as a means to provide citizens’ access to Africa. It is in this context that building new roads and maintaining our existing road infrastructure remains a priority for this government.

Programme Director

We have noted how in the past two decades municipalities have gone all out to intervene in reducing the backlog of roads in the province. This they did by using Municipal Infrastructure Grant and other funds that were made available through various Treasury grants.

You will agree with me that this didn’t amount to much work until a time when municipalities were forbidden from using such funds, so that they can be utilised for. In the various meetings with them, different Mayors have constantly asked that the Provincial government look at how best to address the gap for roads development left by such legislation.

It is indeed a step towards that right direction that today we gather here to formally get into an agreement that would see a more technical astute RAL assisting some municipalities in maintaining their roads or even building new ones.

We have noted how over the years skills within technical departments in municipalities deteriorated, leaving some of them with few people to help implement roads maintenance projects.

When the local government elections were held in 2021, one of the top three priorities that the people raised was roads; either new roads or maintenance of the existing ones. There was then, as there still is today, potholes and blocked storm water drainage systems that make it difficult for people to navigate their ways within those towns.

I am delighted that RAL has responded with swift action when they were called to assist the Mogalakwena Municipality early this year. In Mahwelereng and Mokopane Town, roads were in a dire state owing to multiple challenges including lack of capacity within the municipality.

The inter- departmental approach and municipal partnerships among all government and municipal entities to expedite community services is highly commendable. This is exactly what the District Development Model, championed by President Ramaphosa is about.

Through the Roads Agency Limpopo, we have managed to fix roads in Mahwelereng Township in the Mogalakwena Local Municipality. This demonstrates that as the government, we do assist each other where there is no capacity. The complementary relationship between quality road infrastructure and a reliable public transport system cannot be over emphasised.

With such programmes in action we shall help fight poverty and unemployment by creating job opportunities among all sectors. We are indeed steering the Limpopo economy to a green, resilient and inclusive developmental path, in line with the National Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan and the Limpopo Socio-economic Recovery Plan.

Programme Director

We said in the State of the Province Address that central to these economic recovery efforts, there is a need to position Limpopo as an investment destination of choice for both domestic and foreign investors to enhance the much-needed creation of employment, particularly for the young people.

Limpopo will continue to rise. We have started a great journey of rebirth and renewal. We are emerging from the ashes of yesterday into the glory days of tomorrow. What is important to note today is that partnership would help us turn the fortunes of our province.

Whilst this is partnership within the spheres of government, we are still persuaded that we can go deeper into forging partnership with private sector to deal with the huge backlog of roads in our province. It doesn't need to take us 100 years to deal with this backlog, but with this kind of partnership we can do it in lesser period with determination.

Allow me Programme Director to salute the effort that have brought us here today, knowing that this is just the beginning of a better journey for us as a province. We call upon a seamless cooperation among all the affected parties.

We are calling upon all the affected stakeholders in the province, particularly the people to embrace this partnership, and ensure that it is a success.

With this few words, please allow me to rest my case for today.

I Thank you!

Nda!

Inkomu!

Kea Leboga!

Dankie!