

**ADDRESS BY THE PREMIER OF LIMPOPO, MR. CHUPU STANLEY MATHABATHA ON THE OCCASION OF THE AFRICA DAY CELEBRATIONS HELD AT THE UNIVERSITY OF LIMPOPO.**

25 May 2022.

Programme Director, MEC Thandi Moraka;

***Our host Vice Chancellor, Prof Mahlo Mokgalong;***

Executive management team of the University of Limpopo;

Representatives of the University of Venda;

The leadership of the Students' Representative Council;

Deputy Minister for Arts and Culture;

MECs and senior leaders of our Provincial Government;

Executive Mayor of Capricorn District Municipality, Cllr Mamedupi Teffo;

Executive Mayor of Polokwane Municipality, Cllr Makoro John Mpe;

Our Esteemed Traditional Leaders present here today;

Friends from the Media;

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen:

Let me start first by thanking, the University of Limpopo for providing the stage for us to commemorate and celebrate this historic day on our continent's events calendar.

I also wish to thank the National Department of Arts and Culture for joining us today and supporting our celebrations.

Our Provincial Department of Sport, Arts and Culture has always ensured that our celebrations of this day are conducted in a spectacular and colourful African style.

I thank all of you for being here to reaffirm the message that Africa's time is now. We are here to express our live commitment to the course of Africa's renewal.

We are here to say that whatever the difficulties of the day, the course of Africa must and shall triumph. Our Africa Day celebrations are always characterised by a beautiful blend of colour, dance and music.

This is because our province represents a fusion and melting pot of Africa's diverse cultural heritage.

The evidence of this is the cultural performers which were on display just a while ago.

These performances have given us a tantalising sneak-preview of Limpopo's cultural and artistic riches.

Our province is indeed an important part of Africa's cultural heritage.

On this day, we always communicate a loud message, a message that however diverse our continent may be, we remain one people.

From Cape to Cairo, from Madagascar to Morocco Africa is one.

Africa remains a common heritage that we all share.

Africa remains a pride that can never be taken away from us.

### **Programme Director**

The African Union anthem calls on all of us to unite and celebrate together.

To celebrate the victories won for our liberation, the anthem calls on us to dedicate ourselves to rise together in order to defend our liberty and unity.

The anthem calls on us as the Sons and Daughters of Africa to dedicate ourselves to fight together for lasting peace and justice on earth.

The African anthem demand of all of us to unite and toil together to give the best we have to Africa because Africa is our pride and hope.

Basically, the anthem says to us that ‘everything for Africa, and nothing against Africa’.

**On this day**, we recommit ourselves to the vision espoused in Africa Agenda 2063.

We say to the children of Africa and the world that we are *committed to an* integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa. This is the Africa driven by its own citizens, representing a dynamic force in the international *arena*.

Our perspective of Africa is an Africa that is bigger than its geographical borders because of a vibrant and thriving diaspora.

We want to see the children of Africa who are residing elsewhere in the globe continuing to identify with the mother continent.

Over and above this, we want to see these children of the continent playing a visible and progressive role in the growth and development of Africa.

### **Programme Director**

For us as South Africans, Africa Day presents an opportunity to reconnect and recommit ourselves in support of all interventions to develop a better Africa for a better world.

We celebrate this day on the 25<sup>th</sup> of each May to salute and in remembrance of the formation of the Organisation of the African Unity 59 years ago.

This is a very significant day in the lives of Africans, those who live in the continent and those who are found in the African Diaspora across the globe.

On this day we acknowledge the progress that we, as Africans, have made, while reflecting upon the common challenges we face in a global environment.

Programme Director

We are in this beautiful cosmopolitan city of Polokwane to celebrate the beauty and splendour of our continent.

Africa Day is a living tribute to the many successes that have been recorded by the OAU.

This is also a special tribute to a chain of generations of former African leaders who spearheaded the struggle for Africa's self-determination.

I speak here of visionary leaders such as Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, Emperor Selassie of Ethiopia, Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia and host of other African heroes and heroines.

These leaders have played a pivotal role in the efforts to:

- end the colonization of the African continent and to promote unity and solidarity among African States; and
- coordinate and intensify cooperation amongst African countries in a quest for Africa's development.

The truth of the matter is that Africa has achieved a lot since the formation of the Organisation of African Unity, however there is still much that can be done to advance the African agenda.

As Africans we must never be dismissive of the inspiring progress that has been registered over the past 55 years.

It was because of the successes of the OAU that African leaders decided in 2002 to replace the OAU with the new organisation called the African Union, the AU.

This is because the OAU had accomplished its principal mission to end the colonisation of the African continent.

Our collective mission as this generation of African brothers and sisters, is to grow and develop our continent.

We are also here as the children of this African soil to engage each other on the route to take in order to deliver Africa to its promised land – that is the land of Africa's rebirth.

That is the Africa that is free from hunger, malnutrition and starvation.

That is the Africa that is free from ethnic conflict, tribal wars and genocides.

That is the Africa that is free from haunting diseases such as malaria, Tuberculosis, HIV and AIDS.

That is the Africa that has completely eradicated illiteracy amongst its children, young and old.

I am saying this because by 1999 no single African country was under a colonial authority.

It is for this reason that the task of the African Union became naturally different from that of the OAU.

As I said earlier, the African Union was tasked to ensure an **integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in global arena.**

This is the task that defines the new African Agenda. It is an agenda of socio-economic integration, peace and prosperity.

This new vision was summarised by former President Thabo Mbeki when he addressed the National Assembly in February of 2001, he said, and I quote:

***“Through our own actions we will ensure that poverty gives way to prosperity.***

***As we strengthen the bonds of friendship and solidarity with our fellow Africans we have an obligation to help ensure that, in our country and everywhere else on our Continent, no African child should ever again walk in fear of guns, tyrants and abuse; that no African child should ever again experience hunger, avoidable disease and ignorance; that no African child should ever again feel ashamed to be an African”. Close quote.***

It is therefore our duty as Africans to channel all our energies and expertise to ensure that we end hunger, we bring to end



avoidable diseases amongst our people and that we end ignorance through quality and accessible education.

This is the task that cannot be left in the hands of few individuals who are our leaders; it is a duty for all of us.

Every one of us has something, and must contribute something to assist in the task of rebuilding the African continent.

### **Programme Director and fellow Africans**

Africa has some of the world's most strategic mineral resources, yet Africa's children remain impoverished.

Africa's belly buries tons and tons of oil reserve, yet African children remain starving without basic food stuffs.

The time for Africa's riches to serve its children is now.

For years now, some African leaders have traded African riches to foreign powers in exchange of personal wealth at the expense of African children.

We know that apart from the theft of our mineral resources, more of Africa's wealth leaves the borders of this continent through methods such as tax evasion and dubious tax incentives in favour of foreign businesses.

What is sad is that these riches are in turn used to sponsor wars and regime change against progressive African governments.

This is done in order to replace the will of African masses with puppets regimes that serves the interest of our former colonial masters.

The challenge for Africans, in particular Africa's youth is to fight this corruption.

The other challenge that faces Africa is a phenomenon called brain drain. This refers to a situation where Africa's best minds leave this continent to serve other continents.

These are the people who are educated and trained through Africa's resources, instead of using their acquired knowledge to serve this continent they are attracted by other countries outside our continent.

What we need to do as Africa is to do our best to stop this trend. Secondly, we need to find creative ways of still working with these Africans who are outside the continent for the benefit of our continent.

As African youth you must also work hard to find scientific solutions to Africa's socio-economic challenges.

A wholesale importation of foreign solutions into Africa does not work and would never work. We must find African solutions to African problems.

It is our responsibility as Africans to change the way the world view us, the start of it is to change the way we view ourselves.

In this regard, we align ourselves with the policy commitment of the University of Limpopo of FINDING SOLUTIONS FOR AFRICA.

### **Programme Director**

Let me say in conclusion that as Limpopo we are committed to make our humble contribution towards the dream of a re-born Africa.

Using the words of a renowned African scholar Ngungi wa Thiong'o who said and I quote:

"Our lives are a battlefield on which is fought a continuous war between the forces that are pledged to confirm our humanity and those determined to dismantle it; those who strive to build a protective wall around it, and those who wish to pull it down; those who seek to mould it and those committed to breaking it up; those who aim to open our eyes, to make us see the light and look to tomorrow [...] and those who wish to lull us into closing our eyes" close quote.

It is against the abovementioned background that, we put concrete expression to our resolve that, we will continue working with other African countries to ensure that 'no African child should ever again walk in fear of guns, tyrants and abuse.

We will work to ensure that 'no African child should ever again experience hunger, avoidable disease and ignorance; that no African child should ever again feel ashamed to be an African'.

Indeed, let us all unite and toil together, to give the best we have to Africa

Let the course of Africa prevail!

God Bless Africa!

I thank you!

Ndza Khensa!

Ndo Livhuwa nga maanda!

Kea Leboga!

Baie Dankie!