

**THE KEYNOTE ADDRESS FOR THE AUDIT COMMITTEE
INDUCTION WORKSHOP BY MEC SEPARO SEKOATI ON
BEHALF OF PREMIER CHUPU MATHABATHA, THE
RANCH HOTEL ON THE 08TH FEBRUARY 2023.**

My colleagues in the Executive Council

The Director General of the Provincial Mr. Nape Nchabeleng

HOD of Provincial Treasury Mr. Gavin Pratt

Our HODs from various departments

Senior Managers

Chairperson of the Central Audit Committee Ms. Mashamaite

Ramutsheli

and other cluster Audit Committee members

Ladies and Gentlemen

1. Ladies and Gentlemen, it is an honour and a privilege for me to address this Audit Committee Induction Workshop on behalf of Premier, Ntate Chupu Mathabatha. Allow me to appreciate the members of executive council who in their pressing schedules availed themselves for this important induction workshop.

2. Let me also take this opportunity to welcome the 17 newly appointed and returning Audit Committee members to service

the people and the government of Limpopo, we would like to express a word of gratitude to the audit committee members for availing your service and skills to be partners with the government of Limpopo in ensuring that we improve service delivery through prudent, sound fiscus management and accountability.

3. The decision to centralize the Audit Committees and Internal Audit within the Provincial Treasury, was taken mindful of the benefits that comes with such a decision, such as shared views and ideas, access to centralized Secretariat, saving of resources and most importantly to strengthen the independency and objectivity of the Audit Committees. This model brings consistency and seamless approach, as well as enabling smoother access to the relevant stakeholders in the province.

4. You are therefore coming in as Audit Committee members at a time wherein our province is still faced with challenges of unauthorized, irregular, fruitless and wasteful expenditures, and challenges of late submission of critical documents. Therefore, your inputs and contributions in ensuring that we maintain corporate governance, which goes hand in hand with guaranteeing that the quality and accuracy of information

reported by the departments is credible, will be so invaluable and sought after.

5. Ladies and gentlemen, this workshop therefore sat at a very critical time of our financial year as we are developing plans of action to operationalize the 2023 targets, relooking at our priority areas and deliberate on strategies to improve the audit status of the province and to advance good governance through accountability and service delivery.

6. It must be clear that as a province, we are delighted about the overall improvement of our audit outcomes, which resulted from the growing culture of accountability of the 6th Administration. I greatly appreciate the departments and entities that continued to maintain their clean audits over the years.

7. However, the Honourable Premier is equally concerned of some departments that are regressing at this critical time of the administration after so much investment was put over the years to assist and support the audit work of our provincial government in general. The stagnation of some departments and entities on the same audit outcome levels is also

disheartening in this regard, and we must continue to instill the culture of accountability and discipline taking into account that this not an option but an imperative as enshrined in the constitution.

8. For us to quickly change the tide, we should all recognize that the role of Audit Committees is not merely to police the administration, but to assist in improving service delivery records, and thereby minimizing the reasons and opportunities for service delivery concerns. Empirical evidence has shown the significance of Audit Committee's roles as participants and catalysts of government's efforts to achieve the set service delivery objectives. Therefore, as inter-dependent partners in this regard, we must strengthen our communication lines and implement audit committee recommendations in order to avoid unintended delays and setbacks.

9. I know for a fact that the Central Audit Committee (CAC) Chairperson has access to all critical governance structures such as the Executive Council, HODs Forum, and SMS Meetings in our province. I therefore urge all the Audit Committee members to use all these available avenues to improve on good governance which will then translate into quality service.

10. We undeniably have a joint responsibility to ensure that we strengthen public awareness of the role, the nature and the mandate of the central audit committee within public administration. We also need to strengthen the relationship between audit committees in various clusters and their relevant departments to ensure the audit committees enjoy support from all government officials so that once recommendations are made, they are timeously implemented. It therefore demands of us to stand higher and broaden our perspective, to effectively address our challenges and achieve tangible results.

11. As I conclude ladies and gentlemen, let us work together closely and relentlessly, pressing forward in striving for excellence. I therefore wish you all best in your work ahead.

I thank you