

KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY THE MEC FOR TREASURY HON. SEAPARO SEKWATI ON BEHALF OF THE PREMIER OF LIMPOPO, MR. CHUPU STANLEY MATHABATHA ON THE OCCASION OF THE 2023 HUMAN RIGHTS DAY COMMEMORATION HELD AT IMPALA STADIUM, PHALABORWA

21st March 2023

Programme Director

My Colleagues, Members of Executive Council who are here;

Honourable Speaker of the Provincial Legislature, Ms. Rosemary Molapo,

Members of the Provincial Legislature;

Executive Mayor of Mopani District Municipality, Your Worship Cllr. Pule Shayi;

Your Worship Mayor of BaPhalaborwa Local Municipality; Cllr Merriam Malatji;

Leaders of various political parties present here today;

Our Esteemed Traditional Leaders;

Representative of the Human Rights Commission;

Friends from the Media;

Distinguished Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am honoured to join the rest of the country to participate in this commemoration of the 2023 Human Rights Day.

On behalf of Limpopo Premier Mr. Chupu Stanley Mathabatha, please allow me to state that this day has a great historical meaning to all of us. It is a day for society to reflect and consolidate on the human rights gains we have made so far.

Programme Director

We as South Africans commemorate Human Rights Day annually on the 21st March to remind ourselves about the sacrifices which were made for us to attain democracy and freedom that we are currently enjoying.

We also use the month of March to promote respect for basic human rights for all and to restore human rights in line with the Bill of Rights.

The 2023 Human Rights Day commemorations are held under the theme: ***“Consolidating and Sustaining Human Rights Culture Into the Future”***.

Programme Director,

The history of Human Rights Day dates back sixty three(63) years ago. It is grounded in the Sharpeville and Langa Massacres that took place on the 21st of March 1960.

On that fateful day, in Sharpeville, sixty nine (69) people were killed by apartheid police during a peaceful protest march.

It was during that fateful day when residents of Langa Township in Cape Town, also marched through the streets to protest against the unjust oppressive laws of the apartheid regime. Equally, at Langa Township, our people were met with the brutality of the then system, resulting in scores of injuries and loss of lives.

That is why we as a people use this month to honour those who fought for our liberation and to celebrate the many rights guaranteed under our Constitution that we continue to enjoy today.

It is against this background that we urge people to use this day to remember and honour those who made it possible for us to achieve freedom and democracy.

Their sweat and blood during the Sharpeville massacre and the Langa march, exposed the brutality of the apartheid regime for the whole world to see. This event also united our people's unyielding resolve to continue the fight for freedom.

We dip our revolutionary banners in memory of those who sacrificed their lives on that historic day. In addition, we salute those who are still alive today for their bravery and patriotism. Indeed they will forever be engraved in our minds and souls as heroes and heroines of the liberation struggle.

Programme Director

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.

It is through the Bill of Rights that everyone in our country is guaranteed equality before the law. In the same vein, we ensure that the right to equal protection, the right to freedom of movement, the right to use own language, and right to cultural practices, are protected.

It is however worth noting that the 2023 commemoration of Human Rights Day is taking place at a time when the entire community of nations is grappling with harsh economic conditions. All the countries of the world are still recovering from the devastation caused by Covid-19 pandemic.

Therefore, as we currently enjoy human rights, unfortunately, the cost of living is pushing majority of the people to the social periphery.

This harsh living conditions are exacerbated by the gloomy economic condition globally.

Poverty and unemployment are rearing their ugly heads, fuel prices are high, the price of food is unaffordable to the majority, and all these trample upon the human rights of the majority of South Africans.

In addition, the ongoing electricity crisis in our country has added to the immediate challenges that we need to confront as government. We are however motivated by the current measures announced by President Matamela Cyril Ramaphosa, to deal with the electricity crisis.

As Limpopo, we have since committed ourselves to work towards a plan to actualise the just energy transition project.

During the State of the Province Address last month, Premier Mathabatha announced that we are in a process of finalising the Provincial master plan to mitigate the detrimental effects of load shedding.

The plan to start using solar energy will be implemented in phases, and it is expected to start at our hospitals and clinics.

More details regarding the plan will be unleashed in due course. We are however confident that victory is certain.

Programme Director

I am pleased as I stand before you to state that government has made significant and remarkable strides in addressing socio-economic rights.

As we speak now, majority of our people enjoy rights such as sustainable housing, clean portable water, free and quality education, basic income grants, quality health care, amongst others.

We are saying that much has been achieved by this government, however, more still needs to be done. Guided by the National Development Plan and the Limpopo Development Plan, we are confident that we are building a Limpopo that we all want.

Programme Director

Our history as a people taught us to always remember the founding principles of our democracy and freedom. We are reminded to always embrace a country which belong to all who live in it, especially women and children.

It is in this context that we reiterate our strong message against Gender Based Violence and Femicide.

We are making a strong emphasis for a coordinated societal effort towards a total fight against women and children abuse.

We condemn the barbaric acts of some cowards in our communities who claim to be real men whilst at the same time perpetually abusing and killing innocent women and children. We continue to call on everyone in our communities to wage a massive war against perpetrators of these heinous crimes of gender based violence and femicide.

Programme Facilitator

I wish the people of Limpopo a Human Rights Day that is guided by the Socio-Economic Recovery Plan.

Let us all promote human rights and build a united, non-sexist, non-racial and democratic South Africa, in which all the people live together in peace and harmony.

I thank you!

Inkomu!

Ndaa!

Kea Leboga!

Dankie!

