

**SPEECH BY PREMIER DR. PHOPHI RAMATHUBA DURING THE OFFICE OF THE PREMIER'S STRATEGIC
PLANNING SESSION AT THE RANCH**

10 SEPTEMBER 2024

Facilitators,

Director General Mr. Nape Nchabeleng,

DDG for Corporate Management Ms. Mantsha Gladys Maphetho,

DDG for Stakeholder Management & Coordination Mr. Segooa Walter,

DDG for Institutional Development Support Dr. Sehlapelo Martin,

DDG for Planning Coordination, Monitoring, and Evaluation Ms. Magwaza Sindisiwe Esme,

CFO Ms Kgowana Tebatso,

Members of the Senior Management team,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Ndi Matsheloni, Avuxeni, Thobela, Good Morning, Goie More.

It is a great honor to address you today as we gather on the second day of our strategic planning session—a session that marks a critical juncture in the journey of the 7th administration of our province. The discussions and decisions we make here will not only shape the trajectory of our governance but will also lay the groundwork for the future prosperity of our people. We stand at the helm of government, and it is our responsibility to craft a roadmap that not only identifies the challenges ahead but also seizes the opportunities that will drive our province forward.

Facilitator, strategic planning is not just a routine exercise; it is the cornerstone of our collective success. It allows us to align our resources, talents, and energies with a shared vision of the future. In these sessions, we have the opportunity to scrutinize our current position, anticipate future challenges, and, most importantly, strategize on how to turn our aspirations into reality. A well-crafted strategic plan enables us to be proactive rather than reactive, ensuring that we are prepared to meet the demands of tomorrow with confidence and resilience.

In our province, the challenges we face are multifaceted—ranging from economic uncertainties, unemployment, water shortage, high crime rate, and shifting demographics to the rapid pace of technological advancement and the pressing need for environmental sustainability. However, these

challenges also present us with unique opportunities to innovate, to lead, and to be a beacon of hope and progress for our citizens. It is through strategic planning that we can unlock these opportunities and translate them into tangible benefits for our communities.

Facilitator, during these two days of intensive planning, let us focus on identifying and capitalizing on opportunities that will allow our province to thrive. We must develop policies, programs, and initiatives that are not only responsive to the immediate needs of our diverse population but also forward-looking, ensuring long-term sustainability and growth. Our strategic objectives should encompass economic development, social inclusion, and environmental stewardship, creating a holistic approach to governance that leaves no one behind.

As leaders, we must ensure that our planning is rooted in the realities of our province. The era of crafting beautiful, yet impractical strategies must come to an end. Our strategic documents must be actionable, measurable, and above all, effective in bringing about the positive change our citizens expect and deserve. We must commit to a culture of accountability, where progress is measured against clear benchmarks, and where we are unafraid to adjust our course when necessary to achieve our goals.

Facilitator, at the heart of our strategic planning, should be a set of core values that reflect the principles most important to the people we serve. These values must include a steadfast commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion in all that we do. We must be guided by an unwavering dedication to the public good, ensuring that every decision we make is in the best interest of our citizens.

Our strategic plan should also emphasize the importance of building a responsive, transparent, and accountable state. This means fostering a government that listens to its people, communicates openly, and is held accountable for its actions. It is through such a government that we can truly earn the trust of our citizens and fulfill our mandate to serve them.

Facilitator, as the Premier's Office, we are the highest authority in the province, and it is incumbent upon us to lead by example. We must be at the forefront of driving economic growth, creating job opportunities, and combating poverty. The strategic plan that emerges from this session should be a powerful tool for economic transformation, setting the stage for a more prosperous and equitable province.

In this regard, monitoring and evaluation will play a crucial role. We must set reasonable, yet ambitious targets that challenge us to do better. Regular evaluation of our progress will ensure that we remain on track and that we are continually improving in our service delivery. By setting clear goals and holding ourselves accountable, we can create a culture of excellence within our administration.

Facilitator, as we move forward, I encourage each of you to embrace a culture of collaboration, engagement, and innovation. The challenges we face are too complex to be solved by any one department or individual. It is only through working together—sharing ideas, resources, and expertise—that we can develop the innovative solutions needed to address the issues confronting our province.

Let us also be bold in our thinking, unafraid to challenge the status quo, and to explore new approaches to governance. The future belongs to those who dare to dream and who are willing to take the necessary steps to turn those dreams into reality. Our strategic planning process should be a space where creativity is encouraged and where the best ideas are given the room to flourish.

Thomas Sankara said, " You cannot carry out fundamental change without a certain amount of madness. In this case, it comes from nonconformity, the courage to turn your back on the old formulas, the courage to invent the future. Besides, it took the madmen of yesterday for us to be able to act with extreme clarity today. I want to be one of those madmen,"

In conclusion, I want to express my deepest appreciation for your commitment to this strategic planning process. The work we do here is not just about planning for the next few years; it is about shaping the legacy we will leave for future generations. By working together with a shared sense of purpose and determination, I am confident that we can create a future that is bright, prosperous, and sustainable for all the people of our province.

Thank you for your attention, and I look forward to the fruitful outcomes of our discussions over these two days.

I thank you.