

SPEECH BY PREMIER DR PHOPHI RAMATHUBA DURING THE SOUTH
AFRICAN POLICE SERVICE LIMPOPO EXCELLENCE AWARDS,
MEKETE LODGE, POLOKWANE

06 DECEMBER 2024

Programme Director,

MEC for Community Safety and Transport, Ms Violet Mathye,

Limpopo Provincial Commissioner, Lieutenant General Thembi Hadebe,

Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee on Safety and Security, Hon
Kedibone Lebea

The Right Reverend Bishop Barnabas Lekganyane,

The Right Reverend Bishop Engenas Lekganyane

MMCs for Public Safety present,

Deputy National Commissioners,

Retired Provincial Commissioner, General Sengani

Deputy Chairperson of the Limpopo House of Traditional and Khoisan
Leaders, Kgoshi Rammupudu (Phaahle),

All senior officers of the South African Police Service,

Members of Community Policing Forums,

Distinguished guests,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Ndi Madekwana, Riperile, Thobela, Good evening, Goeie naand.

Tonight, we gather here to celebrate excellence in a profession that is often
overlooked yet remains the cornerstone of safety and stability in our
society, the South African Police Service.

Allow me to begin by extending my heartfelt gratitude to every member of SAPS Limpopo for your unwavering commitment and dedication to serving and protecting the people of this province. You are the everyday heroes who face challenges that most of us could only imagine.

Programme Director, this evening is not just an event; it is a celebration of the men and women who have gone above and beyond in their call to duty.

We are here to honour your courage, resilience, and professionalism in ensuring that Limpopo remains one of the safest provinces in our nation.

To the organisers of this prestigious event, thank you for creating this platform to recognize and applaud the outstanding contributions of our law enforcement officers and their social partners.

Ladies and gentlemen, a professional and dedicated police service is indispensable to any society. It is the backbone of law and order, the shield that protects our communities from harm, and the sword that ensures justice prevails.

Without the SAPS, our homes, businesses, and public spaces would be plagued by chaos and fear.

As a government, we are committed to supporting a police force that operates with integrity, accountability and a deep respect for human rights.

Professionalism within the police service does not only instill public trust but also ensures the efficiency and effectiveness of crime prevention and resolution.

Tonight's awards are a demonstration of the fact that excellence exists within SAPS and must be celebrated.

Limpopo is still rated as one of the province where residents feel safe. This attests to the great work that you as the police are doing.

Programme Director, why is it important to celebrate excellence? Because in recognising and rewarding exemplary performance, we inspire others to follow suit. Celebrating the achievements of our officer's tonight is a powerful reminder that their hard work does not go unnoticed.

Many of you here have been instrumental in solving complex cases, bringing dangerous criminals to justice and restoring peace to our communities.

These breakthroughs do not happen by chance, they are the result of meticulous investigation, collaboration, and dedication. To every nominee tonight, you represent the best of what SAPS has to offer.

Programme Director, let us use this platform to tell a different narrative. While negative headlines often overshadow the good work of our police force, we must remember that thousands of SAPS members are out there every day, making personal sacrifices to keep us safe. They are the silent guardians deserving of our gratitude and respect.

However, we must also address a critical issue that threatens to undermine the integrity of SAPS, that's corruption. Corrupt officers who work with criminals are a disgrace to the badge they wear. They not only betray the public trust but also tarnish the reputation of their colleagues who serve with honor.

Programme Director, let me be unequivocal: there is no place for corruption within the SAPS. Those who collude with criminals must be exposed, held accountable, and removed from the service.

Our communities must feel that they can trust the police, and criminals should fear the sight of a police uniform because they know there is no space for them to operate.

Ladies and gentlemen, fighting crime is not a task for the police alone; it requires a collective effort. Community Policing Forums (CPFs), civil society organisations, and the broader public all have a role to play.

I commend the CPF members and other social partners who work tirelessly alongside SAPS to ensure the safety of our neighborhoods.

As residents, we have a responsibility to report criminal activities and support law enforcement in their efforts.

Silence in the face of crime is complicity, and we must stand together as a united front against those who seek to harm our communities.

In closing, I want to congratulate tonight's nominees and winners once again. Your achievements are a source of pride not only for SAPS Limpopo but for the entire province.

You inspire confidence in the justice system and serve as role models for your peers.

Let this evening serve as a reminder that excellence, integrity, and dedication will always be recognised and celebrated. To every member of

SAPS Limpopo, continue to serve with pride and purpose, knowing that your efforts make a profound difference in the lives of millions.

To the organizers of this event, thank you for creating a platform that uplifts and motivates our law enforcement officers. Let us continue to foster a culture of excellence, accountability, and collaboration in the fight against crime.

Together, we can build a safer Limpopo for all.

Thank you.