



LIMPOPO

PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

TRIBUTE BY LIMPOPO PREMIER DR. PHOPHI RAMATHUBA AT THE FUNERAL SERVICE OF MPHO VINCENT MAKHURUPETJE, RAMOTSHINYADI VILLAGE, TZANEEN

08 February 2025

**Programme Director,
The Makhurupetje Family,
Honourable Speaker of the Limpopo Legislature, Ms. Makoma Makhurupetje,
Deputy Speaker of Limpopo Legislature Ms Tebogo Mamorobela,
MECs present,
Executive Mayors and Mayors,
Traditional Leaders,
Distinguished Guests,
Friends, and Mourners,**

Avuxeni, Thobela, Ndi matsheloni, Good morning, Goie more.

It is with a heavy heart that I stand before you today, as we gather to bid farewell to a son of the soil, a leader, a brother, and a comrade, Mpho Vincent Makhurupetje. Moments like these are never easy, for no words can truly capture the sorrow that fills this room, nor can they ease the grief of a family that has lost one of its own. Today, we mourn not just for the Makhurupetje family, but for all of us who had the privilege of knowing and working with Mpho.

Similarly, we take this opportunity to pay our respects to our fallen soldiers who perished in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo while on a peacekeeping mission. We mourn with their families and urge our communities to stand in solidarity with them during this difficult time.

**Death is a cruel thief,
It knocks without warning, stealing our joys. It silences laughter and leaves echoes of sorrow. It robs us of our brothers, our sisters, our dreams.**

And today, it has stolen from the Makhurupetje family - A son, a brother, a leader, a friend.

The weight of grief is heaviest upon those left behind,

And today, our hearts ache for our dear Speaker, Ms. Makoma Makhurupetje, Who must now walk a road darkened by the absence of her beloved brother, Mpho Vincent Makhurupetje.

When we received the heartbreaking news of Mpho's passing, it felt like a wound not just to his family but to all of us who knew him. A life taken at 51 feels unfair, too soon, too sudden. As a government, when we lose someone before they reach the expected years of life, we feel a deep sense of loss and failure because each life is a story that deserves to be told in full.

Mpho was a man of passion and conviction. His love for politics was evident from a young age, and he dedicated his life to the liberation struggle, ensuring that the dreams of our people were not just spoken but realized. As a loyal member of the African National Congress, he led with courage in many youth structures and within his branch, believing in the ideals of a free and prosperous South Africa.

Today, as we reflect on Mpho's life, we must ask ourselves: Are we nurturing leaders like him? Are our young people ready to take the baton? The answer must be yes. The transformation of our province and our country depends on the participation of young minds, just as Mpho dedicated himself to the struggle of our people. We urge our youth to get involved in governance, in politics, and in shaping the future of this province.

Mpho's story also reminds us of the power of education. With a diploma in financial management and administration, he understood that education is a tool for change. We must encourage more of our young people to follow this path, to acquire skills that will uplift their families and communities. Education is the key to success, and through perseverance and determination, we can see the change that Mpho envisioned for our country.

As a government, we are committed to ensuring that no child is left behind in education. Our focus on vocational training must be strengthened so that we produce more electricians, plumbers, mechanics, and other skilled professionals. It is time to change the mindset that only university degrees lead to success. TVET colleges are equally important, and parents, teachers, and communities must support young people in choosing the best path for their talents and ambitions.

Mpho lived in a time when communities are struggling for basic necessities, and unfortunately, some of those struggles remain today. One of the greatest challenges facing our people is the shortage of water. Water is a necessity, not a luxury.

As a government, we are working tirelessly to improve water supply in our communities, but illegal connections and the so-called "Water Mafia" are making this fight harder. Let it be clear—those who steal water from our people will face the full might of the law. We are working with law enforcement to put an end to these criminal activities, and soon, the perpetrators will be held accountable.

Even as we mourn, we must also look to the future. Our country has been entrusted with the presidency of the G20 this year, a responsibility that places South Africa at the center of global economic discussions.

Limpopo must be ready to take its place in these conversations and ensure that we benefit from the opportunities that arise. We must be proud ambassadors of our province, showcasing the beauty, culture, and potential of Limpopo to the world.

To the Makhurupetje family, we stand with you in this difficult time. Losing a loved one is never easy, and the pain of parting is immeasurable. But take comfort in knowing that Mpho's legacy will live on in the lives he touched, in the struggles he fought, and in the example he set for future generations.

May his soul rest in eternal peace.

I thank you.