

SPEECH BY LIMPOPO PREMIER DR PHOPHI RAMATHUBA DURING THE INAUGURATION
OF THOVHELE VHO MUTELE LIVHUWANI NTSHANDULE, MUTELE TRADITIONAL
COUNCIL, MUSINA MUNICIPALITY, VHEMBE DISTRICT

10 OCTOBER 2025

Program Directors, Speaker of Musina Municipality, Cllr Siyaphi Shirilele, Mutele Royal Family Member, Mr Azwinndini Gavhi, MEC for COGHSTA Mr Basikopo Makamu, Executive Mayor of Vhembe District Cllr Freda Nkondo, Mayor of Musina Local Municipality Cllr Nkhanedzeni Godfrey Mawela, Chairperson of the Limpopo Provincial House of Traditional and Khoi-San Leadership, Hosi Pheni Ngove, Senior Traditional Leaders present, Faith-Based Organisations, Members of the business sector, Distinguished guests, Members of the media, Ladies and gentlemen,

Ndi matsheloni, Avuxeni, Thobela, good morning.

It is with great pleasure and reverence that I stand before you on this significant day in the history of the Mutele Clan. Today, we are here to witness the unfolding of history, one that carries the weight of tradition, the pride of lineage, and the promise of a new era for this community.

We gather here united in celebration, hope, and purpose as we formally install Vho Thovhele Mutele Livhuwani Ntshandule as the rightful leader of the Mutele people.

Like the great Limpopo River that flows with memory and wisdom, the story of the Mutele Traditional Community runs deep through generations. This land carries the footsteps of ancestors who walked it with dignity, fought for it with bravery, and preserved its customs with unwavering loyalty. In the rhythms of tshigombela, in the poetry of zwidade, in sacred rituals and ceremonies, the spirit of the Mutele people has remained unbroken.

From Thovhele Mutele Ndwammbi to Thovhele Tshitangoni Jack and Khosi Khorommbi John, the leadership of this clan has always reflected continuity and heritage. Today, that sacred baton passes not only from one generation to another, but from a history written largely by men to a future now being shaped by a powerful, capable and visionary woman.

It is truly pleasing and deeply inspiring to see a woman ascending to the highest traditional throne of the Mutele people. This is not only historic, but transformative. It marks the dawn of a new chapter where patriarchy gives way to progressive customs, where wisdom is no longer measured by gender, and where traditional leadership evolves without losing its soul.

We commend the Mutele Royal Family for this bold and progressive decision. In your choice of Vho Thovhele Livhuwani Ntshandule, you have sent a powerful message not only to Limpopo, not only to South Africa, but to Africa and the world: women, too, carry the calling of leadership from birth; women, too, are chosen by ancestors to preserve culture and advance their people. May other royal families and traditional councils take note, today the Mutele Clan has made history.

Vho Thovhele Livhuwani Ntshandule grew up as a princess, disciplined by royal expectations and guided by the Christian values instilled by her late parents, Khosi Mutele Khorommbe John and Nndafhiseni Emmah. She pursued her studies with distinction, completing matric at Thengwe High School before graduating with an Honours Degree in Social Work with Psychology from the University of Venda. Her academic journey speaks volumes about her dedication, discipline and desire to serve humanity.

She is a leader who understands the struggles of the people not from a distance, but from a place of empathy and purpose. This combination of education, tradition and spirituality places her among a new generation of traditional leaders who are prepared not only to preserve heritage but also to confront modern challenges with intellectual courage.

To all young traditional leaders seated here today, let her story be your inspiration. In this era, royal blood alone is no longer enough. Our people deserve leaders who are educated, ethical, development-driven and globally aware. We encourage all future traditional leaders to further their studies so they can drive development in their community.

As a government, we stand firm beside Vho Thovhele Mutele Livhuwani Ntshandule and her council. We are not blind to the challenges facing Ha-Mutele and surrounding villages: water shortages affecting households and livestock, poor road infrastructure that disconnects villages and affects schooling, shortage of modern school facilities, lack of proper traditional council offices, youth unemployment, and persistent issues of safety due to limited policing resources.

We want to assure the community that we hear you — *ri a pfa, ri a vhona* — and we remain committed to working together to address these challenges.

One of the greatest assets of traditional communities is land, yet much of it lies underutilised. The 7th Administration is finalising a framework that will support traditional councils to lease land for sustainable investment not through selling land, but through fair leasing models that bring income, jobs, roads, business opportunities and long-term development.

Traditional areas hold some of the richest land in our province. If used strategically for agriculture, tourism, renewable energy, mining partnerships and small business infrastructure, this land can unlock the economic freedom our people have been

waiting for. The era of land lying fallow is over. We must think boldly and act decisively. Investors are ready. Opportunities exist. The time is now.

To you, Vho Thovhele Livhuwani Ntshandule,

Munzhelele wa ha tshinyi tsha musha,tshino liwa maembe nga vhana, vhahulu vha tshi la tadulu.

I we wa ha nyavhulungu vhutete vhuno lunzhedzwa nga ana nzhele asina nzhele a fhaladza.

Magolo a no bva Nzhelele, Mutangaumani.

I we mulanngwe, wa ha mutele ku sa endi nwana, a ka enda a vhuya a tsha lukukula.

Wa nndu ya Salapavhana Gangile.

Today you carry the expectations of your community, but you also carry our full support. Lead with humility, lead with courage, and lead with wisdom.

May the ancestors walk with you. May God guide you. May your leadership bring unity, dignity and development to the Mutele people.

May your reign be prosperous and peaceful.

I thank you.