

WELCOME ADDRESS BY PREMIER DR PHOPHI RAMATHUBA DURING THE DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT MODEL OVERSIGHT VISIT AT MOGALAKWENA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY, WATERBERG DISTRICT

28 May 2026

Programme Director;
Speaker of the Legislature, Dr Makoma Makhurupetje;
Deputy Speaker of the Legislature, Ms Tebogo Mamorobela;
Members of the Executive Council;
Executive Mayor of Waterberg District Municipality, Cllr Jack Maeko;
Mayor of Mogalakwena Local Municipality, Cllr Ngoako Taueatsoala;
Councillors;
Chairperson of the Limpopo House of Traditional and Khoi-San Leaders, Hosi Peni Ngove;
Director-General, Mr Nape Nchabeleng;
Heads of Departments;
Municipal Managers;
Traditional Leaders;
Representatives of the Mining Sector;
Distinguished Guests;
Members of the Media;
Ladies and Gentlemen;

Thobela, Ndi matsheloni, Avuxeni, Good Morning, Goeie More,

It is both an honour and a privilege to welcome you all to this important District Development Model Oversight Visit here in the Mogalakwena Local Municipality, one of the most strategic economic zones in our province.

We gather here today not merely as government officials, councillors, administrators, or stakeholders, but as servants of the people who have entrusted us with a sacred responsibility — the responsibility to improve lives, restore dignity and build a capable developmental state that leaves no community behind.

This gathering must therefore be understood as a platform of action, accountability and solutions.

Programme Director,

The District Development Model remains one of the most important instruments introduced by government to ensure integrated planning, coordinated implementation and responsive governance. It compels all spheres of government to work together under the principle of “One Plan, One Budget, and One Voice” in responding to the needs of our communities.

We recall with pride that Waterberg District was chosen by our President Cyril Ramaphosa as one of the first pilot sites for the implementation of the DDM in 2019. That historic decision was not accidental. It was informed by the strategic importance of this district to the economic future of Limpopo and South Africa.

Today, we are here to assess progress, confront challenges honestly and accelerate implementation where there are delays.

Over the course of this week, the Executive Council DDM Monitoring Teams, led by all MECs representing their respective departments, have been hard at work on the ground across Mogalakwena Local Municipality. These oversight visits have taken us to schools, villages, roads, health facilities, infrastructure projects, and various communities where government services are being delivered. This exercise was not undertaken for compliance purposes, but to give practical meaning to responsive governance.

It has afforded us an opportunity to interact directly with our communities, assess progress, identify bottlenecks and ensure that commitments made by government translate into tangible improvements in the lives of our people.

The observations and engagements from these visits will greatly enrich the discussions and resolutions that must emerge from this DDM engagement.

The people of Mogalakwena are not interested in endless meetings and beautiful presentations. They want water flowing from their taps. They want roads that are safe and drivable. They want functioning municipalities. They want ethical leadership. They want jobs. They want hope.

And as leaders, we must respond decisively.

Programme Director,

One of the most urgent issues confronting this municipality is water provision. Water is life. Water is dignity. Water is economic development. Without water, there can be no meaningful growth, no agriculture, no industrial expansion and no improvement in the quality of life of our people.

This is why we are emphasising the urgent establishment of a Water War Room that must bring together government, municipalities, the mining sector, water entities, engineers and all relevant stakeholders to coordinate interventions and fast-track solutions.

The challenges facing Mogalakwena require collective leadership responsibility. Government alone cannot carry this burden. We need stronger partnerships with the mining sector operating in this region. These mines are extracting wealth from the soil of this province, and therefore they must become active partners in changing the living conditions of the communities surrounding them.

Yesterday, we engaged with representatives from the mining sector on issues relating to Social and Labour Plans. We continue to make a strong call for mining houses to deepen their investment in roads, water infrastructure, skills development and local economic development initiatives that directly benefit communities.

The relationship between government and the mining sector must not only be transactional; it must be developmental.

Programme Director,

Another critical challenge confronting this municipality is the increasing congestion along the N11 corridor. The heavy traffic congestion is negatively affecting economic activity, road safety and the daily lives of our people.

The decongestion of the N11 cannot be delayed any further.

We therefore call for stronger collaboration between government, SANRAL, municipalities, and the mining industry to find sustainable and urgent solutions. Roads are not simply infrastructure projects; they are economic lifelines. They connect workers to opportunities, businesses to markets, and communities to services.

We also wish to acknowledge the efforts being undertaken by Mogalakwena Local Municipality in dealing with the challenge of potholes and road maintenance in the town and other parts of the municipality.

While we recognise that more work still needs to be done, the interventions already underway demonstrate commitment towards improving driving conditions, restoring public confidence and ensuring safer mobility for communities and businesses alike.

What is important now is to accelerate these efforts and ensure sustainability so that our people can begin to experience visible and lasting improvements in infrastructure conditions.

At the same time, we must confront the issue of governance and leadership within our municipalities.

Communities deserve councillors and leaders who are disciplined, ethical, accessible and committed to service delivery. The era of instability, internal conflicts and poor governance in municipalities must come to an end. We need leadership that inspires confidence among communities and investors alike.

A municipality that lacks stability cannot deliver services effectively.

Programme Director,

We are also encouraged by the participation of the Limpopo House of Traditional and Khoi-San Leaders during this Service Delivery Week. Traditional leaders remain important partners in development and social cohesion.

Where traditional councils function effectively, they become important pillars of stability, dispute resolution, and community mobilisation. We acknowledge that there are still outstanding traditional leadership matters in parts of this district, and we remain hopeful that those matters will be resolved amicably and speedily in the interest of our people.

As government, we remain committed to strengthening partnerships with Magoshi and all traditional leadership structures because sustainable development requires unity and cooperation.

Programme Director,

For Limpopo to rise, Mogalakwena must rise.

This municipality occupies a central place in the economic future of our province. It hosts some of the richest mineral deposits in the world, but that wealth must translate into improved living conditions for ordinary people.

Economic growth that does not create jobs, reduce poverty, or improve livelihoods is meaningless.

That is why we continue to place emphasis on local economic development, support for SMMEs, infrastructure investment, agriculture, and skills development for young people.

Our people must become active participants in the economy of this district, not spectators while wealth leaves their communities.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let this oversight visit become more than a routine government programme. Let it strengthen our collective resolve to act with urgency, honesty, and purpose in addressing the challenges facing our communities.

The people of Mogalakwena expect leaders who listen, leaders who work together and leaders who implement solutions.

Through the spirit of cooperation that defines the District Development Model, we must leave this gathering with practical interventions, stronger partnerships and a renewed commitment to ensuring that service delivery reaches every village, every household and every community across this municipality.

I thank you.