

KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY PREMIER DR PHOPHI RAMATHUBA DURING
THE LEPELLE NORTHERN WATER GOLF DAY DINNER AND PRIZE-
GIVING AT EUPHORIA GOLF ESTATE, MODIMOLLE-MOOKGOPHONG
LOCAL MUNICIPALITY, WATERBERG DISTRICT

11 September 2026

Programme Director, Mr Joe Makhafola;

Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee on Home Affairs in Parliament, Mr
Mosa Chabane;

MEC for Co-operative Governance, Human Settlements and Traditional
Affairs, Mr Pule Shayi;

MEC for Economic Development, Environment and Tourism;

MEC for Public Works, Roads and Infrastructure;

Executive Mayor of Waterberg, Cllr Jack Maeko,

Executive Mayor of Polokwane, Cllr John Mpe,

Executive Mayor of Vhembe, Cllr Miyelani Chauke,

Mayors present;

Special Advisors to the Premier of Limpopo;

Chairperson of the Limpopo House of Traditional and Khoi-San Leaders,
Hosi Pheni Ngove;

Special Advisors to the Premier of Limpopo; Chairperson of the Limpopo
House of Traditional and Khoi-San Leaders, Hosi Pheni Ngove;

Chairperson of the Lepelle Northern Water Board, Dr Nndweleni Mphephu;
Deputy Chairperson, Mr Dewet Motalane Monakedi; Members of the Board;
the CEO and Executives of Lepelle Northern Water;

Deputy Chairperson of the Water Research Commission, Dr Harrison
Pienaars;

Sponsors and partners; distinguished guests; ladies and gentlemen.

Ndi Madekwana, Thobela, Rhiperile, Good Evening, Goeie Naand!

The South African government has coined a very powerful slogan that “Water Is Life, Sanitation Is Dignity”. Nowhere does this come out so powerful than what has made us gather here today.

To show the importance of life, today we go beyond bulk water and street reticulation, it is about empowering young minds, creating nexus for their upliftment.

That gives me such a delight to join you here today for this noble cause under the powerful theme, “The Power of Collaboration.”

Let me begin by congratulating Lepelle Northern Water on reaching an important milestone of 66 years of service to the people of Limpopo as well as the Water Research Commission who are celebrating 55 years of existence. This is not merely a celebration of longevity; it is a celebration of a public institution whose mandate is central to the wellbeing, dignity and economic future of our province.

We also commend the Water Research Commission, sponsors, golfers, business partners and all stakeholders who have come together to support this worthy initiative.

Tonight reminds us that a golf day can be much more than sport. It can become a platform for partnership, fundraising, networking and, most importantly, social impact.

The theme before us captures a fundamental truth about development: no institution can succeed alone. Government, state-owned entities, municipalities, business, academia, research institutions and communities must work together if we are to build a resilient and prosperous Limpopo. Water security, in particular, is not the responsibility of government alone. It is a shared responsibility.

This is a lesson we have experienced directly through the establishment of the Provincial Water War Room, particularly in response to recurring water supply interruptions in Polokwane and surrounding areas. Through the cooperation of Lepelle Northern Water, the City of Polokwane, municipalities, the Department of Water and Sanitation and other stakeholders, we have been able to respond more decisively and improve the reliability of water supply.

The lesson is simple but profound: when institutions work together, communities benefit.

Water is not simply a basic service. Water is an economic asset. It is the foundation upon which we build industrialisation, agriculture, mining, tourism, housing, healthcare, education and investment. As we prepare for the upcoming Limpopo Investment Conference in October 2026, our message

to investors is clear: Limpopo is open for investment, but investment requires infrastructure and infrastructure requires water.

You cannot lay the first brick of a factory, hospital, school, housing project or business development without reliable water.

This is why the observation by the leadership of Lepelle Northern Water that no development can take place without water must remain firmly at the centre of our development agenda.

Tonight's fundraising initiative is particularly important because it looks beyond today's challenges towards tomorrow's solutions. The proceeds will assist students who will pursue water engineering, helping us develop the skills required to solve the water challenges of the future.

As government, we also welcome efforts to revive and strengthen the Limpopo Bursary Fund. Our province and our country need more engineers, scientists, technicians, artisans, hydrologists, environmental specialists and other water-sector professionals.

If we want different solutions tomorrow, we must invest in different skills today.

As the Limpopo Provincial Government, we remain committed to ensuring that every community has access to safe, reliable and sustainable water.

To all the golfers, sponsors, partners and organisers: thank you for answering the call. Your participation demonstrates that when we bring our resources, expertise and influence together, we can turn a sporting occasion into an instrument for development.

Let us therefore leave this evening with a shared commitment: the future of Limpopo depends on our ability to work together.

Through collaboration, innovation and shared responsibility, we can build a province where every household has water, every young person has an opportunity, every business can grow and every investor can have confidence in our future.

Together, let us turn water security into economic prosperity, and economic prosperity into a better quality of life for the people of Limpopo.

I thank you.