ADDRESS BY PREMIER OF KWAZULU-NATAL HON. NOMUSA DUBE-NCUBE MARKING THE 29TH ANNIVERSARY OF FREEDOM HELD IN UTHUKELA DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY ON 27 APRIL 2023

THEME: CONSOLIDATING AND SAFEGUARDING OUR DEMOCRATIC GAINS

Programme Director: MEC for COGTA and Acting MEC for DSAC;Mrs B. N. Sithole-Moloi

MEC for Education; Ms M.C. Frazer

MEC for Transport, Community Safety and Liaison; Mr S Hlomuka

MEC for Agriculture and Rural Development ; Mr S Zuma

Chairperson of KZN Provincial House of Traditional & Khoi-San Leadership ; iNkosi R.S. Shinga

Mayor of uThukela District Municipality; Cllr iNkosi N.B. Shabalala

Deputy Mayor of Okhahlamba District Municipality: Cllr N.E. Tshabalala

All Deputy Mayor’s and Speakers present

Members of the Provincial Legislature present

Inkosi P.D.H. Chiliza, EXCO Member of the Provincial House & Khoi-San Leaders

Inkosi Hadebe, Ward 6& 24 under Inkosi Langalibalele LM

Inkosi Khumalo

Inkosi yakaNkwanyana

All Traditional leaders present

Director-General: Dr Nonhlanhla O. Mkhize

Heads of Department present

All councillor’s present

Members of Civil Society and LGBTQI+ present

Religious and Business fraternity present

Distinguished guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

INTRODUCTION

Today is an important day on which millions of South Africans voted for the first time in 1994.

Before that, since 1652 when the first white man set his foot in South Africa, for close to 400 years the majority were excluded from choosing their own government.

KEY ANNIVERSARIES TO MARK THE 29TH YEAR OF FREEDOM

This is a momentous year which falls on the 150th anniversary of Moses Mncane Mabhida, Secretary General of the South African Communist Party, a hero of our struggle after whom we have now named the iconic Moses Mabhida Stadium.

This year also marks 150 years since the birth of a pioneering woman Nokutela Dube, the wife of Dr JL Dube the founding President of the ANC.

It is a year in which we recall 40 years since the demise of Isithwalandwe Dr Yusuf Dadoo who led the Natal Indian Congress, and 30 years of the demise of Cdes Chris Hani and Oliver Tambo.

In 2023 we mark 20 years since Tata Walter Sisulu passed away, ten years of the passing of Tata Nelson Mandela and five years of the passing of Mama Winnie Madikizela-Mandela.

It is the 180th anniversary of the death of Mkabayi ka Jama in 1843. Princess Mkabayi kaJama is a loadstar for the empowerment of women and through her example we are today free to take our places in society without fear.

It is 150 years since the Langalibalele Rebellion. As we recall, this quest for freedom from colonialism saw iNkosi Langalibalele of AmaHlubi rebel against colonial oppression in the Estcourt/uMtshezi areas. The name of this municipality honours the tradition of resistance against colonialism and apartheid and is a fitting place to hold this province’s Freedom Day event.

Indeed, in just over 12 months the Sixth Administration ends, and we will celebrate the glorious achievement of 30years of democracy. We remember Freedom Day because we are the fortunate generation that lives in a democracy protected by the Constitution we adopted in 1996. Our Constitution is now the highest law of our land and guarantees our freedom.

The Constitution casts in stone the uniting veil emanating from the Freedom Charter which is that South Africa belongs to all. The right to life is now enshrined, and we cannot forget that such was not respected during apartheid.

The state killed people such as Thembisile Chris Hani, Dulcie September, Solomon Mahlangu, Ruth First, Victoria and Griffiths Mxenge, and countless others. Many were imprisoned, tortured, banned and exiled merely for opposing apartheid.

With our Freedom we have achieved what our forebears only dreamed of, what heroes such as Inkosi Langalibalele and Chris Hani died for. Because of their sacrifice, millions have houses, free access to health and overall dignity.

School Nutrition Pronouncement

Today we must also speak about our feeding schemes which have ended hunger in our communities. Government provides nutritious meals to 2.2million poor children every day who would otherwise go hungry. We are proud that the National Schools Nutrition Programme currently serves learners in 5 444 schools in the province. The National School Nutrition Programme is a defining intervention introduced by the ANC-led government to support the poor and vulnerable. Through this programme we have seen massive improvements in learner attendance and participation in class, reduction in learner absenteeism and much-needed support to learners from child-headed households.

The programme supports 2 000 service providers who deliver food to participating schools. This promotes economic participation and contributes to the improvement of poor communities by creating opportunities for over 14 000 volunteer food handlers. The food handlers are recruited from unemployed parents of learners and are paid a monthly stipend.

However, following recent negative reports in the media surrounding the programme, we have noted the official withdrawal of the service provider from the contract. We have consulted with the ANC and I have directed the Premier’s Advisor Advocate Linda Zama to leave no stone unturned in establishing the facts around the scheme. We also support the probe by Minister of Basic Education Angie Motshega, and we will cooperate with all law-enforcement agencies should the need arise. We will not allow the years of investment in the lives of our people to be undermined by anyone including service providers or indeed opportunistic opposition parties.

Advancing Education to build a skilled future

A recent report by StatsSA found that over the past 10 years education and training outputs have improved in KwaZulu-Natal significantly. The number of people without any schooling went down by 4.91% between 2011 to 2021 while those with matric increased from 1.79 million to 2.59 million.

If we can provide a solid education to our youth we will soon find ourselves on a faster developmental plane. As Madiba says: “Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world”.

A major development over the past two years is that graduates from universities are now largely female.

This is at the Mangosuthu University of Technology, University of KwaZulu-Natal and Durban University of Technology's (DUT). This development reflects the performance of the Matric Class of 2022 which improved fastest nationally. Schools achieving a 100% pass rate in KwaZulu-Natal increased from 145 in 2021 to 212 in 2022. For the third consecutive year, Ugu District ranked first with an 87.2% pass rate.

Remarkably, 11 out of the 12 districts achieved 80% and above. Following Ugu, Umkhanyakude District recorded 86.3%, last year, Amajuba 85.5%, Umgungundlovu 84.1%, iLembe 83.9%, Zululand 83.7%, Umlazi 82.8% and Harry Gwala 82.5%. King Cetshwayo District received 81.7%, Pinetown 80.5%, uThukela 80% and Umzinyathi 79.8%.

More bachelor's degrees were recorded from 61,856 in 2021 to 69,849 in 2022, diploma passes from 42,128 in 2021 to 43,908 in 2022.

Building a Healthy Society

An educated, well-fed and healthy nation is solid ground for a bright future. In this regard the province will this year build 11 new clinics and re-purpose 4 district hospitals into regional hospitals.

A new hospital is being built in Nongoma and we are implementing e-health systems to reduce patient waiting times.

We are also strengthening the “Make Me Look Like A Hospital” programme targeting 28 poorly performing hospitals.

ENTERING A SMART KZN

As KwaZulu-Natal faces the unemployment of graduates there is an opportunity to reskill and retrain our young people. In October I launched the Mobile Data Analytics Labs in Pietermaritzburg. These Labs are being used by youth to develop their Fourth Industrial Revolution data analytics skills. This programme is being rolled-out to all the Districts in the province.

With our improving educational outcomes, KwaZulu-Natal can certainly rise to become a leading province in the country and in the continent in the skills of the future.

The province is rolling out the KZN Broadband Phase 1 covering 1150 Wi-Fi sites. The SA Connect Phase covers 2 300 sites, while telecommunication companies Social Obligation will rollout 8890 sites, bringing the total to 13 040 sites.

We have partnered with universities and the National School of Governance NSG in the skilling, reskilling and upskilling of public servants. The Provincial Planning Commission, the KZN Human Resource Development Council which includes the private sector, has identified the key skills that are needed by the economy of KwaZulu-Natal in order to grow and to create jobs to drive away unemployment, poverty and inequality.

One of these interventions is our Smart Agri-Hub through cooperation between Durban University of Technology and Fujian Agriculture and Forestry University in China. The Agri-Hub will be based at the Durban University of Technology Pietermaritzburg campus. As part of this relationship a SA Youth Innovation and Entrepreneur Overseas Centre Business Skill Training Practice Base will be established to train youth in various skills in China. Youth who complete training will showcase their products or plans to the Chinese business market at a Business expo. This project will be replicated as it has a lot of potential.

Campaigning against GBVF

As we make the above achievements, recent incidents such as the killing of 10 family members in Plessislaer recently are shocking displays that life is cheap and dispensable to criminals.

We must also address the phenomenon of Izinkabi, hired guns who are driving murder in the taxi industry and in society in general. As we mark 29 years of our freedom our message is clear: We will not be defeated. We stood against apartheid and eventually we won.

We must use the same strategies and tactics of unity and mass mobilisation to return our communities to peace. Like the apartheid regime, criminals are a tiny minority. They are wrong and we are right, and no evil force can thrive against mass resistance. Let us expose them.

We are establishing Ward-based GBVF Rapid Response Teams integrating them into War Rooms. We are coordinating the refurbishment of shelters, building 50 Victim Friendly Rooms and developing the GBV-F App with a panic button.

The abuse of women is a blight on our democracy, and we cannot be free until women are free. Women must be free to walk in the streets of our towns, cities and rural areas, to express their opinions without being told to shut up, to work and to provide for their children without fear.

It is Nelson Mandela, the founding President of our democratic South Africa who tells us: “Our endeavours must be about the liberation of the woman, the emancipation of the man and the liberty of the child. Freedom cannot be achieved unless women have been emancipated from all forms of oppression...”

PREMIER’S SERVICE DELIVERY PRONOUNCEMENTS FOR THE DISTRICT

Let me now turn to the issues that affect the community and which we have identified in the leadup to today.

1. All 10 schools which use mobile classes/ park homes due to overcrowding like Bhekuzulu, Ephangweni and Mthiyane, and those with asbestos roofs like Bhambe are being prioritized for construction. This will be done by 01 August 2023 by the Department of Education

2. Residents of Zwelisha and surroundings who use D69 have for more than ten years not been able to cross the river/stream due to a makeshift bridge that is unsafe.

We wish to confirm that the D69 road is being upgraded with tar and the Zwelisha bridge whose construction was slowed down by the contractor issues resumed in January 2023. The contractor was given clear timelines to ensure that by 30 October 2023 the Zwelisha bridge must be completed.

MEC for Transport Sipho Hlomuka and the OSS/DDM MEC Champion for uThukela District MEC Mbali Frazer will visit this bridge as part of Operation Siyahlola once completed . With stakeholders MEC Hlomuka will officially open the bridge on 30 October 2023;

3. uThukela District continues to have Water Challenges as compounded by governance issues, inability to keep engineering skills and administrative instability.

The KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Government has intervened through the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs appointing an engineering firm to provide the required water engineering support to uThukela District. The engineers are working with the Ministerial Representative deployed at uThukela District and have developed medium-to- long term intervention plans in uThukela. Some of these projects are in wards and are funded by national government through MIG and WSIG (grants) and will commence in the current financial year.

MEC for COGTA , Mrs Sithole-Moloi is working with OSS/DDM MEC Champion MEC Frazer and uThukela district through the Ministerial Representative will convene PROVINCIAL WATER INTERVENTION ROADSHOWS in each local municipal area of uThukela.

This will target Amakhosi, business, communities and other stakeholders outlining immediate, short, medium and long-term interventions to address water issues at uThukela. This will take place between May and July 2023 led by COGTA and the Department of Education.

4. The national government through the Integrated National Electrification Programme grants has enabled ESKOM and local municipalities to invest huge amounts of money to electrify households and communities of uThukela and iNkosi Langalibalele. This includes strengthening power infrastructure through installing additional lines.

In the municipalities of uThukela, national government through National Electrification Programme grants will invest in the electrification of households. We must tell the communities and households the truth which is that funding for such electrification projects come from His Excellency President Ramaphosa as the Head of State in South Africa.

COGTA and Eskom shall henceforth work with municipalities of uThukela to ensure that all electrification projects undertaken are all officiated by the three spheres of government namely: National Department of Minerals Resources and Energy which gives the grant to Eskom, COGTA KZN and the local government (local municipality). This will take place once a year/Annually.​

5. The SAPS with the Department of Community Safety and Liaison are working around the clock with communities, Amakhosi and other stakeholders to reduce stock theft and its associated murders through weekly operations and the Communities in Dialogue programme.

The crime-fighting plan of KwaZulu-Natal will see an injection of R10 million per provincial department targeting measures to eliminate stock theft in this part of the province.

6. The matter of Ntabamhlophe SAPS which is far removed from communities is also an on-going matter being prioritized by national government. A mobile Community Safety Centres (CSC) has been set up to provide police services closer to the communities.

Various station commanders where such services are deployed will work with the Community Policing Forum, Amakhosi, Councillors and other stakeholders to inform communities about this service and its work schedule. This will be in​May 2023 led by the​uThukela SAPS and the Department of Community Safety and Liaison.

7. uThukela District has a record of being one of the districts with a high rate of pregnancy and various interventions have been undertaken through community awareness programmes. The OSS/DDM MEC Champion will as part of the June 2023 Youth Month Programme at uThukela officially unveil a District Sanitary Dignity and Teenage Pregnancy Committee. The committee will be made up of multi-disciplinary stakeholders in local municipalities with clear programmes to roll out including challenges of school dropouts, ukuthwala and premarital and teenage pregnancy.

The Office of the Premier working with the Department of Social Development and Health will ensure these district structures are established during the youth month in June 2023 working together with Departments of Social Development, Health and Education.

8. KwaZulu-Natal is prioritizing the construction of permanent human settlements in the entire uThukela District. The ePhangweni Human Settlement project is currently running in Ward 24 in terms of laying infrastructure services which are now halfway, and the actual construction of houses is to begin afterwards.​

9. The uThukela municipal area has several children and youth requiring birth certificates and Identity Documents.

The Office of the Premier will support the OSS/DDM MEC Champion MEC Frazer in this district to roll out the Undocumented Children’s Programme to ensure that children and youth are registered in the national database of all RSA bona fide citizens (Home Affairs) targeting wards of Amakhosi in the district.​ This will be done on a Quarterly basis​

10. The people of uThukela and some parts of KwaZulu-Natal continue to fall victim to heavy rains, disasters and floods.

The national government has assisted these households who were mostly affected by such floods in a form of R48 950 000.00 which was transferred to the account of iNkosi Langalibalele Local Municipality. This targets 4 projects which are Colita Bridge, Lochsloy Bridge and Ntabamhlophe Roads which could be undertaken for a period of July-December 2022.

During the same period, national government allocated R14 414 000.00 into the account of Alfred Duma Municipality for the period August 2022-January 2023 targeting Hamilton Road, iNtondolo Street, King Street and Princess Street.

Unfortunately, the municipalities could not utilize the allocated funds within the given timeframe and extension was granted to the municipalities.

Both municipalities have been given additional grants namely:R22 000 000.00 for Alfred Duma for 6 projects, and R76 950 000.00 for iNkosi Langalibalele for 4 projects which are Storm Water and Roads in Estcourt CBD, storm water and roads in Weenen, storm water and roads in the township of Weenen-Ezitendeni and gravel roads in Weenen rural area.

Today we give both municipalities 12 months to complete these projects and spend the grants.

The Office of the Premier will engage national government so that necessary support, monitoring and intervention mechanisms are established. The provincial government will monitor and intervention where necessary so that such funds benefit the intended beneficiaries as per the stipulated timeframe. This will be done by April 2024 together with National Treasury.

11. Small scale farmers especially the Black and African ones play a critical role in the subsistence and commercial farming.

The Provincial Government through the Department of Agriculture will ensure that small scale farmers of uThukela are supported with the necessary equipment and production material. The offices of OSS/DDM MEC Champions in all districts will be consulted by Agriculture Department District and local offices for support to deserving beneficiaries. This will be done on a Quarterly basis.

12. uThukela District is one of the municipalities where national and provincial governments have invested in several interventions which unfortunately were not officially handed over to deserving communities.

Against this backdrop all Head of Departments through the Office of the Premier have been asked to submit reports on these projects and programmes. Provincial government through the line function MEC and or OSS/DDM MEC Champions will formally hand over such projects and programmes to deserving beneficiaries.

Mayors and Municipal Managers are reminded not to launch, do any sod-turning or officially open or hand over projects and programmes whose owner is the national and provincial governments without consent, concurrence or delegation.​On-

13. uThukela in general as the municipal area has a sizeable number of women and youth the majority of whom are far removed from urban areas in terms of accessing opportunities for survival and empowerment.

The Office of the Premier will immediately work with key stakeholders in developing programmes and interventions to roll out at uThukela dubbed WOMEN AND YOUTH STIMULATION PROGRAMME FOR BETTER UTHUKELA AND BETTER KWAZULU-NATAL. This will be launched during the Youth Month in June 2023 and Women’s Month August 2023. ​

Data analyst Max Roser capture the spirit of today when he says, and I quote: “Freedom is impossible without faith in free people. And if we are not aware of our history and falsely believe the opposite of what is true we risk losing faith in each other”.

End.