

**ADDRESS BY THE PREMIER OF THE PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL
SAPS SERVICE EXCELLENCE AWARDS CEREMONY
AT COASTLANDS HOTEL, DURBAN
25 OCTOBER 2013**

Master of ceremonies;
MEC for Community Safety, Mr Willies Mchunu;
HOD of the Department of Community Safety and Liaison;
KwaZulu Natal Police Commissioner, Mamunye Ngobeni;
Representatives of the Metro Police and the South African Police Service;
Municipal representatives;
Members of the KZN Community Crime Prevention Associations
Members of Community Policing Forums;
Honoured Guests

Good morning

First, let me take this opportunity to welcome everyone present.

It is indeed an honour for us as a province to gather together to recognize members of the South African Police Service who have gone the extra mile in order to provide outstanding service to the people of this province, thus enabling government to live up to its mandate of providing a better life for all South African citizens.

These awards are as a result of the performance evaluation system to oversee the quality of work done and the impact government is making. It is based on criteria that evaluate commitment to the principles of hard work, fairness, honesty, integrity and humble service to the people.

It gives us pride that this project has since been implemented throughout the country. The national Department of Public Service and Administration is currently in the process of implementing a national awards scheme in line with similar awards in the provinces.

Having often stated that gone are the days when civil servants behaved as if they were doing a favour to members of the public in servicing their needs. This government represents the will of the people.

Honoured guests, ladies and gentlemen, I am sure that you are aware that in our effort to create a more responsive and competent civil service we launched the KwaZulu-Natal Citizens' Charter in 2011.

The Citizens' Charter was developed from the contents of the Bill of Rights as provided for in Chapter 2, Sections 7 to 39, of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa.

The Citizen's Charter is thus a commitment by government to the citizens of the province of KZN to provide them with information mapping out the route to follow should service standards be compromised.

The government, therefore, by way of the Citizens Charter makes a solemn commitment that it will uphold the rights of each citizen in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution of the Republic, and as set out further in the Bill of Rights.

At the beginning of this term of office of this current government, the President of the Republic His Excellency Mr J.G Zuma described crime as a top priority for government.

It is for this reason that in 2010 the provincial government launched the United Front Against Crime. Our feeling as government at that time was that it is important that we unite the people of this country and begin to move away from the usual attitude of often blaming the police but to refine a multi prong strategy to fight crime.

As government we have always stated that focusing on blaming the police tends to conceal the major role that each and every one of us should be playing in crime prevention.

Crime occurs in the community and in most cases criminals are our neighbours. They are masterminds who drive flash cars and are respected by members of the community

Critically, young people are recruited by these masterminds for housebreakings, shoplifting, armed robberies and car hijackings of luxury motor vehicles and trucks which are sold to buyers and car dealerships in other provinces and neighbouring countries.

Many desperate young people from tertiary institutions are recruited – given fraudulent, IDs, Payslips and credit cards to hire vehicles from legitimate rental companies and end up not returning them. If not dismantled in chop shops, these vehicles are often sold to other provinces and neighbouring countries.

Some of these young skilled young people now work as insurance brokers, transporters and specialized artisans who change chases numbers and other defining features of the vehicle.

Instead of using their skills to grow the economy of the country, the desperate and educated young stars are growing businesses of these “Kinpins”.

As government we are also dealing with criminal syndicates who are crippling our hospitals by stealing medication destined for needy patients.

Organized syndicates are supplying pharmaceutical companies including government institutions with counterfeit, expired and non-regulated drugs. The syndicates run unregistered clinics and pharmacies and are also involved in exports and imports.

As government we condemn that theft of medicine destined for our hospitals across the province as this will derail our efforts aimed at achieving quality healthcare for all.

Access to health care and essential medicines is needed to reduce disease and death, and enhance quality of life. Medicines are only beneficial when they are safe, of high quality, and properly distributed and used by patients.

We are encouraging collaboration with professional bodies to ensure that we invoke practice licenses of any health professionals – nurses, doctors and pharmacists found involved in any illegal trafficking of state medicine.

Although government has made available certain drugs free of charge, these are stolen and sold at exorbitant prices on the open market or in neighboring countries with different pricing policies.

Ladies and Gentlemen, while we sit here, we must acknowledge these criminal acts are committed by our own children and relatives. If there is violent murder and stolen property, most people in the community know exactly who the first suspicious individuals in the area are. These criminals are a tiny

minority but they have created so much fear in our communities such that we all feel hapless and neglected by the police.

Police alone cannot deal with criminals unless if there are people in the community who can work with police to make it possible for criminals to commit crime.

Today I want to appreciate the commitment of all members of the South African Police Service. The SAPS Service Excellence Awards have become an important annual event which gives government the opportunity to appreciate the important role that police play not only in terms of fighting crime but to promote the culture of the promotion of human rights and access to justice in the community where we live.

Crime results in the deprivation of the rights and dignity of citizens and poses a threat to their rightful participation in the reconstruction and redevelopment of this province. The rights and freedoms, which the constitution entrenches, are threatened every time each citizen becomes a victim of crime.

As government, we are aware of the challenges police face on a day-to-day basis, and acknowledge your effort at providing quality service.

The people who voted us into office voted with the hope of access to justice. By voting they were exercising their democratic right to elect into office the government they believed will deliver services.

We thus need to continuously remind ourselves that this freedom belongs to the ordinary people of our country and they are the ones who must taste the fruits of freedom in a manner that changes their lives for the better. This is their inalienable right.

We salute all of you for your commitment to the principles of fairness, honesty, integrity and humble service to the people of KwaZulu-Natal. I want to assure all of you this morning that all members of the Provincial Executive have committed themselves to building a team of motivated cadres who are willing to work as a collective to improve the lives of all our people.

Cabinet is committed to working with all communities to ensure that KwaZulu-Natal is at the forefront of the fight against crime. We are continuously creating an environment where the police are able to carry out their responsibilities working with the community.

We call upon civil society to participate in the Fight Against Crime campaign: churches against crime, business against crime, street committees and neighborhood watch groups to work together with government to fight crime.

Amongst us today are members of the community and members of the Community Policing Forums. We thank you for coming forward to pledge your support to work with police to fight all forms of crime from our communities.

Another important role that members of CPF and Crime Prevention Associations should play is that of the promotion of unity, generosity and Ubuntu within our communities.

We want to see a prosperous and better South Africa but we forget that this will start with the contribution that we can make where we are as members of the society.

Crime is fuelled by the nature of life that our people live in and by the nature of the environment within which we conduct our daily activities.

Some of those who get involved in crime are people who never received any sense of love and warmth when they were brought up. They grew up in an environment where there is alcohol abuse, domestic violence, hatred and a lack of supervision of children.

Therefore we need to work together, as partners, to deal with the whole aspect of building the spirituality of all our people in the neighborhood.

We must create an environment of peaceful co-existence and acceptance of human beings by one another. We must show compassion, love and always help the next person during difficult times.

With those words, I want to congratulate all the recipients of the awards today.

I thank you