

**SPEAKING NOTES FOR THE HONOURABLE KAN PREMIER, MR. ES MCHUNU DURING THE
MANDELA DAY CELEBRATION**

Programme Director

Minister of Higher Education, Dr. Blade Nzimande

Distinguished Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

We meet here today to reflect on the legacy, the work and contribution of our founding democratically elected President Nelson Mandela, and how we can use that to inspire the nation. It is very important that most of our audience today is the youth, the school-going youth in particular.

Our youth is constantly bombarded by negative things happening in our country and province. This give them, little or no inclination to exert themselves in order to change the situation. The prevailing situation in our country and province, be it poverty, unemployment, youth unemployment and lack of social cohesion will not be resolve by anyone else, but by us. Every year during the month of July, as a Nation and Province we reach out to the length and breadth of our country to rekindle the spirit of selflessness, dedication and commitment as demonstrated by President Mandela

Upon his release on 11 February 1990, Mandela devoted himself whole heartedly into his life and work, to strive to attain democratic values and principles which founding fathers and mothers of the ANC set out almost four decades earlier. Mandela has never wavered in his

devotion to democracy, equality and learning. Despite terrible provocation, he has never answered racism with racism. His life has been an inspiration in South Africa and throughout the world to all who are oppressed and deprived and to all who are opposed to oppression and deprivation. In a life that symbolises the triumph of the human spirit over man's inhumanity to man, Nelson Mandela accepted the 1993 Noble Peace Award on behalf of all South Africans who suffered and sacrificed much to bring peace to our land. The progressive values and principles that Mandela embodied became abundantly evident in his 1993 Nobel Peace Lecture.

Mandela acknowledged other recipients of this award including Chief Albert Luthuli, Archbishop Desmond Tutu and Martin Luther King Jnr and Frederick Willem De Klerk. He pointed out in particular that Martin Luther King Jnr grappled and died in an effort to make a contribution to the just solution of the same great issues of the day which we have had to face as South Africans. Madiba summed up this issues in more definite and empathic way: **“We speak here of the challenge of the dichotomies of war and peace, violence and non-violence, racism and human dignity, oppression and repression, liberty and human rights, poverty and freedom from want”**. The countless human beings, both inside and outside the country had the nobility of spirit to stand in the path of tyranny and injustice without seeking selfish gain. They recognised that an injury to one is an injury to all and therefore acted together in defence of justice and a common human decency.

Mandela believed that the triumph over the inhuman system of Apartheid would finally bring to a close a history of five hundred years of African colonisation and mark a great step forward in history and also serve as a common pledge of the peoples of the world to fight racism wherever it occurs and whatever guise it assumes. Madiba made a call that we devote what

remains of our life to the use of our country's unique and painful experience to demonstrate, in practice, that the normal condition for human existence is democracy, justice, peace, non-sexism, prosperity for everybody, healthy environment, equality and solidarity among the peoples.

In his State of the Nation Address, President Zuma reiterated Madiba's Ubuntu values and principles and made them an integral part of the agenda for this Parliament and his administration. He linked the legacy of his predecessors, in particular, Nelson Mandela, in the following terms: I quote **“we have sought to create a united cohesive society out of our fragmented past. We are called upon to continue this mission of promoting unity in diversity and to develop a shared value system, based on the spirit of community solidarity and a caring society. Our shared value system should encourage us to become active citizens in the renewal of our country. We must build a common national identity and patriotism”**

In order to meet the challenges of tomorrow, it is important that we begin to prepare ourselves today. The Minister of Higher Education will tell you more about their experiences and the career choices made by the youth, which in many instances result in unemployed graduates. There are solutions though which need to be properly harnessed. I want us to look into the Youth Chief Directorate and the Programme that have been initiated with the view to meet the youth half way. These opportunities are available for you to try and see where exactly you can feet. But I must quickly indicate that the key word is acquisition of new Skills.

A vast amount of work has been done by the Youth Chief Directorate with the view to assist the youth. The following programmes have been initiated and are currently running since the

establishment of the Youth Chief Directorate. Under Skills Development, the following programmes were identified to underscore rampant skills shortage.

- Work integrated Learning
- KZN Youth Technical Short Skills Training
- Learner and Teacher School Support for grade 12 and 3 in the UMkhanyakude District
- Project Sukuma

Under Economic and Social Development section, the following projects were identified:

- Youth Infrastructure Development Programme
- Support the Creation of New Venture
- SMME's and Cooperatives by youth in the economic sector with high potential
- Youth Procurement and Enterprise Development System and Support

Progress being made by other government departments:

- KZN Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs have identified the following projects which are already in place:
 - KZN Youth Technical Short Skills Training,
 - Unemployed Graduates Assistance Programme,
 - KZN Youth Film Production Programme,
 - Youth in Manufacturing Initiative,
 - Youth Procurement and Enterprise Development Systems and Support,
 - New Venture Creation for Youth Business Start-Ups,
 - External Student Bursaries,
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- And Internships Opportunities within department.

Social Development: A number of initiatives are already in place. This include the following:

- Mentoring Programmes,
- Youth Club Planning Workshops,
- Youth Skills Summit,
- Behavioral Change Programme,
- Youth Dialogue Feedback Session,
- Youth Development Academies,
- Skills Development Training, Youth Centres

Agriculture and Rural Development have the following programmes for the youth:

- Capacity Building and Training Youth Cooperatives,
- Young Entrepreneur Award
- And Youth conference.

We trust that the Nelson Mandela month in July will serve as a common national platform to serve humanity and to deepen and entrench the spiritual philosophy of Ubuntu and its inherent values of equality, freedom and justice for all