



premier

Office Of The Premier  
PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

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## **Senzo Mchunu decries the poverty of knowledge 16 March 2016**

The poverty of knowledge must not be allowed to reign supreme in KwaZulu-Natal. That's the message from KZN Premier Senzo Mchunu at the opening of a two-day Symposium of "Think Tank" at Isibaya Casino in Durban today.

"It is this province that has in the past hosted the inaugural and founding conference for the formation of the African Union, hosting all the heads of states from the African Continent."

"Many other conferences of note such as the World Economic Forum, Non-Aligned Movement, the largest AIDS conference in year 2000, Commonwealth Conference have been successfully hosted in this city."

"We highlight these to contextualize the importance we attach in portraying this province as an important site for exchange of ideas, and finding solutions to problems of this country, the continent and different parts of the globe."

"We must encourage robust debates on political, social, economic and heritage issues in order to set the agenda for ourselves and future generations. Today is an opportunity to look at the strengths that we must utilize to advance ourselves and the weaknesses that we must correct to advance the African child. It is important to remind one another that our struggle is not over."

"Despite the political freedom that we have attained, including the right to vote and participate in all institution of governance in our land, the African people - as a group - still suffer extreme poverty irrespective of the wealth in the country they occupy.

This is so despite the African continent remaining amongst the richest country in natural resources such as oil and precious minerals: gold, diamond, platinum, copper, iron ore etc. Most of the resources remain untapped or are exploited by richer nations in the east and west."

"We have rich history and heritage that we need to use in order to ensure social cohesion – a prerequisite for social stability. However, the biggest threat to our democracy is the inability to see the value of diversity."

"Our constitution was designed specifically to protect all cultures and customs practiced by our people even minority communities. Under the apartheid regime, communities were segregated socially but now we have a democratic government and a prosperous country which belongs to all who live in it."

"The essence of the struggle for liberation was to ensure that "all people shall have equal right to use their own languages, and to develop their own folk culture and customs."

Ends

Issued by the Office of the Premier

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