

SPEECH BY THE MEC RESPONSIBLE FOR THE LIMPOPO DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS, ROADS AND INFRASTRUCTURE, HONOURABLE AZWINNDINI JEREMIAH DINGAAN NDOU ON THE OCCASION TO MARK THE OFFICIAL LAUNCH OF THE LIMPOPO CONTACTOR DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME ON THE 28TH AUGUST 2014 AT THE MEROPA CASINO, POLOKWANE.

Thank you Programme Director

Executive Mayors and mayors

Speakers and Chiefs Whip

Councillors present tonight

Accounting Officer, Section 100 (b) Mr. Mbuyi Dondashe

Acting Head of Department, Walter Mothapo

Representative from the National Department of Public Works, Mr. Ignatius Ariyo

Representative from Stefanutti Stocks, Mr. Mike Sikhakhane

Senior management and officials of the Department of Public Works, Roads and Infrastructure

LCDP beneficiaries present here

Invited guests

Members of the media

Ladies and gentlemen.

In 1955 masses of the people of South Africa met under the auspices of the African National Congress in Kliptown, Soweto for the adoption of the Freedom Charter. Under the stewardship of Professor ZK Mathews, the Freedom Charter was adopted as the rallying song for the development of the formerly oppressed people of South Africa. This celebrated document states that “the people shall share in this country’s wealth”. As the Limpopo Department of Public Works, Roads and Infrastructure we welcome you as we are giving life to this document which still reverberates fresh in the people’s minds.

When the African National Congress took office in 1994, it was faced with the enormous challenge of changing the living conditions of the African masses who were excluded from the mainstream economy of their country of birth, treated as strangers in their own Motherland, all these because of the evil apartheid laws. This exclusion did not allow the creation of wealth and as such resulted in the underdevelopment of the Black majority, relegating them to mere spectators in the economic development of their country. The result hereof is the skills shortage that the country is faced with today which undermines the purpose of growing the economy and development of entrepreneurship.

Upon taking power, the ANC led government saw it necessary to intervene in order to redress the systematic exclusion of the

majority of South Africans from the mainstream of the South African economy. It must be acknowledged that this exclusion restricted the creation of wealth and imposed underdevelopment of black communities and relegated them to being only of cheap labour. The denial of access to skills and reserved jobs was undermining the very purpose of growing the economy and the development of entrepreneurship, and thereby undermining the growth of the whole South African economy.

After having been to every corner of the province, this event comes at the better time as it marks my 100th day in office. It is a welcome relief as to finally be with you in this event that seeks to develop the contractors in the province of Limpopo. Developing any sector for the good of our people and province tops our priority list for development occupies a centre stage in the National Development Plan, a document that gives us direction on what measures to do to move our country forward.

I am also proud that while there are certain people who go about indicating that the ANC government has abandoned the Freedom Charter, almost everything that we do, day in and day out, responds directly to the clauses of the Charter.

The expansion of the mining industry in our province, especially in Burgersfort, Lephalale and Vhembe creates an opportunity for the

built and construction environment industry to tender for the construction of the mining infrastructure. The development of contractors will therefore create an opportunity for them to obtain built construction contracts through tendered processes.

The increasing number of infrastructure projects in the province will also create opportunities for small contractors to compete for contracted services, especially on road construction projects.

In the past our province was faced with the challenge of poor workmanship by contractors whose intentions was only to milk the province's resources. This led to the huge back log especially in the maintenance of roads.

With this programme we seek to address the current high unemployment rate and infrastructure backlogs by presenting opportunities for emerging and established contractors, who are faced with enormous challenges that impede on their development.

It is in our highest hopes that this intervention will make a difference in the fight against unemployment, and also create sustainable employment for the less and semi-skilled unemployed people.

After the successful completion of the programme by the contractors, we must be clear and honest that going forward as

government we will not tolerate poor work. We will follow up on every work that the department gives to contractors, either in the province or the municipalities.

There has to be a red line where contractors will be able to work according to what they promise when they are awarded tenders. This is meant to ensure that as the department we get value for money to the benefit of all the people of our province.

We acknowledge the challenges that contractors will be faced with in the execution of their duties because every sector has its unique problems that are not easy to overcome.

My office is always open if there is any problem that may be encountered by the contractors as we collectively try to move Limpopo forward.

I would like to warmly congratulate everyone who has made this event possible. The initiative by all stakeholders, especially Stefanutti, enhances the participation of previously marginalized groups in the economy of this province and the country at large. I am confident that the successful implementation of the vision of the Limpopo Contractor Development Programme will not only meet the objectives of Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment Act, but will contribute significantly to the overall developmental objectives of our government.

This Programme must set an example, as this is the industry with a large number of diverse sub-sectors, showing Africa and the World what can be achieved when South Africa work together in making sure that this country is a better place for all those who live in it.

I urge all of you here today to embrace this programme in your future business engagements. The most important thing we want to achieve through this programme is to transform this country into non-racial and non-sexist as the Freedom Charter said and I quote “the right of the people shall be the same regardless of race, colour or sex.”

Thank you