



Office of the Premier

North West Provincial Government
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



EULOGY BY NORTH WEST PREMIER, PROF TEBOGO JOB MOKGORO, AT THE SPECIAL OFFICIAL PROVINCIAL FUNERAL OF THE LATE MME SOPHIE MAINE HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 26 AUGUST 2020 IN SCHWEIZER RENEKE, MAMUSA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY, NORTH WEST PROVINCE

Honourable Programme Director

Lelapa loo Rra Maine le lelapa loo Rra Morule; and all the bereaved families, including the African National Congress family

The national and provincial leadership of the ANC, the leagues and all the Alliance structures

All current and former elected public representatives across all the national, provincial and local government spheres

Baagi ba Mamusa le Afrika Borwa ka bophara

Baeng botlhe ba ba leng gone mosong ono bao ba tlotlegang

Comrades and friends

Ladies and gentlemen

Accept our most sincere condolences.

It is said that a mother's love is always with her children and that losing a mother is one of the deepest sorrows a heart can know.

However, her goodness, her caring, and her wisdom live on, like a legacy of love that will always be with you.

We, the people of the African National Congress and citizens of this Province, have indeed in the late Cde Sophie Maine lost a mother to both the young and the old, a unifying voice of reason in times of deep division and disagreement, a rock upon which the pre-democracy foundation of the governing party in this Province had been built, a strong woman of substance, iMbhokodo, a leader of our people.

She came from a generation of selfless women who were prepared to take the fight against apartheid to the then regime; and this was inclusive of the fight to ensure the total emancipation of women from all forms of oppression; she came from a generation of women that were shaped by the material conditions of their era and made it their mission to contribute to the liberation of her people and the freedom of future generations.

The following quote from the late Mama Winnie Madikizela-Mandela rings true when one seeks to define Cde Sophie's commitment to the liberation struggle and I quote, **"I have ceased a long time ago to exist as an individual. The ideals, the political goals that I stand for, those are ideals and goals of the people in this country. They cannot forget their ideals. My private self doesn't exist. Whatever they do to me, they do to the people in this country"**.

Mama Sophie was a product of her people and their struggles – she continued to carry their aspirations and personify those struggles until her last day on this earth.

To some of us who had come into contact with her through her political work, she was an embodiment of revolutionary commitment to a cause aimed at making a lasting difference in the lives of her people.

It is a fact of history that Mama Sophie went about her work in parliament and the African National Congress with diligence and in a dignified manner; and treated every one with respect and warmth, irrespective of people's social standing.

As an elected public representative at the dawn of democracy, she was unwavering and instrumental in elevating the struggles of women, people with disabilities and the vulnerable at the heart of her parliamentary work for a period of ten years.

It is therefore very disheartening to witness the setbacks we have been faced with, as society, in the emancipation of women brought about by the continuing cases of Gender Based Violence (GBV) across the length and breadth our country; at times, the perpetrators going unpunished and still at large.

The freedom of women and children in this country continues to be violated by those that society expects to be guardians instead of murderers and rapists; is this the South Africa that Mama Sophie and her generation so bravely fought for and dedicated the prime years of their lives to attaining?

We need to dip our heads in shame, as leaders and society, that we live in a society that has become dangerous for women and children to free exist within – and in Mama Sophie’s memory, we need to do more to ensure that our homes, neighbourhoods and public space are safe for all, including women and children.

We are thankful for her life and her commitment to a free and just society; we are equally in immense pain because of our inability to have gathered en masse to afford her a send-off befitting her stature in this community, province and country due to the restrictions in place as a result of our efforts to stop the spread of COVID-19.

We, therefore, have an inherent responsibility that, in her memory and of those that have come before her, we make it our mission to deliver quality services aimed towards the betterment of the lives of the most downtrodden; we should not waver from our historical commitment to emancipate the majority of our people from the shackles of poverty, inequality, unemployment and lately, the spread of the novel Coronavirus.

Let us dare not fail her.

However, we are a society besieged by a litany of allegations and accusations in the public as well as private sector spaces – we have become so much obsessed with consumption and self-enrichment that the generation of Mama Sophie and those that came before her would in fact be ashamed of the conduct displayed by some of us who hold public office.

When we recently published our Provincial COVID-19 Expenditure Report, I alluded to the fact that to steal from the people who have entrusted you with leadership is a crime but to steal from them during a pandemic is a crime against humanity.

The manner in which some of us have behaved with the public purse in the procurement of goods and services in the last four months in the fight against the spread of COVID-19 leaves much to be desired – in fact, the older anti-apartheid generation and those that laid the post-1994 foundations of our democratic dispensation would look down on us with utter disdain; for we have not displayed the attributes of what and how a leader should be in a time of crisis.

The late Cde Chris Hani, in an interview on how a future government should look like, said, and I quote, **“What I fear is that the liberators emerge as elitists... who drive around in Mercedes Benz’s and use**

the resources of this country... to live in palaces and gather riches”.

I fear to say indeed those that Cde Chris Hani referred to are well and alive amongst us – the allegations and accusations on the rampant corruption surrounding COVID-19 procurement as well as the alleged involvement of public office bearers is enough cause for concern.

Corruption has become such a painful and distasteful part of our social fabric that we have normalised its existence in our midst; this is a serious indictment to what our society and some of its leaders have become.

The worst disease in today’s society has to be corruption and it is curable; we need to be transparent in how we disburse the public purse and not a society where media leaks force us to publish COVID-19 procurement reports.

This is not the society that Mama Sophie, Mama Winnie, Helen Joseph, Lillian Ngoyi and all the other pioneering leaders of our people had in mind when they committed the better part of their lives to the struggle and freedom of the oppressed masses.

It is therefore upon us as those that are entrusted with the public purse to ensure that our conduct will not subject the poorest of the poor to

further economic suffering, entrenched poverty and institutionalised inequality for generations to come; we need to use the resources in our disposal to change the lives of our people in memory of Mama Sophie and his contemporaries.

May her revolutionary soul find eternal peace because nothing will ever take away our collective memories of Mama Sophie.

To the entire family, may your memories be ones that give you comfort and be reminders of happier times.

I thank you.

Ends