

**State of the Province Address by Honourable Thandi Modise,
Premier of the North-West Province on 18th February 2011**

Hon Speaker of the Provincial Legislature,

Hon Members of the Executive Council,

Hon Members of the Provincial Legislature,

Judge President and Members of the Judiciary,

Foreign Dignitaries,

Hon Leaders of Political Parties,

Our Esteemed Traditional Leaders,

Your Worship Executive Mayors and Mayors of our Municipalities,

Speakers of our Councils,

Heads of Our Security Agencies,

The Director General and Leaders of Administration in all spheres of
Government,

Chairpersons and Chief Executive Officer of State-Owned Enterprises,

Leaders of Labour Movement, Civil Society, Faith Based-

Organizations and Business,

The South African Local Government Association Chairperson,

Comrades and Friends,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Honourable Speaker,

“Now all over the world there are three words, which spoken together express the triumph of freedom, democracy and hope for the future. They are President Nelson Mandela”. These are the words of former US president Bill Clinton speaking about our own Father Nelson Mandela.

Honourable Speaker,

On behalf of the people of the North West let me therefore take this opportunity to salute our father of the nation, Ntate Mandela. He is the foundation and pillar upon which the cherished noble values of human dignity, justice, freedom and democracy are embodied. We wish him speedy recovery and comfort.

Honourable members,

As the ANC led government, we are mindful that the struggle of our people for their own emancipation was not in vain. Under trying circumstances, they put at risk everything at their disposal, including their lives so that they can, today, call themselves a free society. These gallant fighters of our people can only find relevance in their freedom when it restores their humanity and nationhood.

Honourable members,

The dawn of freedom was also the rebirth of our country, the reclaiming of the identity of her people and the realisation of everything they yearned for. It is

the celebration of the sacrifice made by those that fell whilst fighting for their people's freedom.

Honourable Speaker,

We should at all times ask ourselves whether we affirm that their struggle was not in vain and that their freedom is not only symbolic but meaningful in the way it continues to transform their lives for the better. Only then can we proudly say: 'we are true representatives of the people, a functional democracy founded upon their will'.

Honourable members,

Today, I am quite aware that many want to know how different this year would be from the previous one. Will there be any change? I want to reassure the people of our Province that we are not perfect, that we cannot have the imperfections of yesterday nor claim to use the best standards of today as lifetime measures of our potential; we have to improve our way of doing things. We must make a determination to expedite our pace of government services to the people. Such determination must translate into actual improvement in the living conditions of our people.

Honourable members,

We are mindful that circumstances always call on us to use our skills where they can be used best. We are a new team determined to change the image of our government and province for the better.

Honourable Speaker,

As the ANC led-government, we are proud of the changes we have introduced and facilitated in the living space of our people. We are aware that we could have accomplished more. Instead of beating ourselves to a pulp over why we could not achieve more, we should take the imperfections of our past as lessons on how to ensure the future continues to shape a better tomorrow for our people.

Honourable Speaker,

The president of the ANC in the January 8th statement and State of the Nation Address has emphasised that we must collectively put concerted efforts in creating more jobs for our people, this year going forward. As the North West provincial government, we must aggressively heed that call, as we are all aware of the devastating effects of unemployment in our province and country. We are thus called upon by history, the mandate of the ruling party and the current socio-economic conditions in our province, to ensure that unemployment is accorded requisite attention.

Honourable members,

Our outline for the developmental changes for our people would not be adequate unless we also acknowledge the strides that were made to bring us to where we are today.

Fellow citizens of the North West Province,

In line with our national priorities for creating decent jobs and sustainable livelihood, strengthening skills and Human resources base, providing health care to all, facilitating rural development, food security and fighting crime, we are proud to stand here and report that we have for the past year achieved, amongst others, the following:

- Achieved an 8.2% increase in grade twelve learner pass rate and thus giving us a total of 75.7%
- Assisted one-hundred-and-ninety-four (194) emerging social service organizations to register as Non-Profit Organizations.
- Comparison of the average real economic growth rate from 2002 to 2009 recorded by the provincial economies shows an average growth rate of 3, 7 per cent.
- Hosted the FIFA World Cup games in a peaceful and entertaining environment.

- Created an anti poaching unit and ensured that rhinos are micro-chipped and an electronic tracking device is installed on most Rhino horns.
- Integrated environmental and biodiversity sensitivity layers of the province into the Provincial Spatial Development Framework. About six (6) local municipalities are already in the process of aligning theirs to the Framework.
- Distributed 1947 bicycles to 45 schools and also implemented scholar transport operations in four districts to provide mobility to rural learners.
- Trained 620 farmers in the three District Municipalities as part of the Western Frontier Beef Beneficiation Programme.
- Upgraded roads D511 Brits to Thabazimbi and D96 Kalhoek to Mantsire.
- Ensured that 239 health facilities implement Basic Ante Natal Care Strategy.
- Tested 95% of pregnant women for HIV against a target of 90%,
- Decreased TB defaulter rate by 8.3% above the target of 8%,
- All 24 municipalities have established their IDP structures
- 60548 households were provided access to water and 12 681 households were provided access to sanitation in the period under review.

Honourable Speaker,

Though more has been achieved, much is still to be done. The challenge of providing the best for our people should, always, inspire us to rise above the margins we had set for ourselves.

Honourable members,

We should acknowledge that our rural development initiatives have not met with the sort of partnerships we expected from various stakeholders. This has led to the slackening of pace in ensuring that the rural landscape is transformed speedily to enable people to enjoy the best of services like the rest of society.

Honourable speaker,

If we are to live to our commitment to create a sustainable, effective and efficient local government system, we must acknowledge that our local government sphere has certain weaknesses that continue to overshadow the painstaking work done by hardworking, honest and loyal men and women.

Honourable Speaker,

Most, if not all municipalities are known to be struggling to sustain the provision of descent services to their communities. This situation cannot be left unchanged if we are to make this freedom we enjoy, a worthy one for all our people. In this regard, stern measures will continue to be taken to stem corruption and maladministration at local level. Our departments of finance

and local government and traditional affairs are under instruction to work closely with municipalities and help build capacity to meet the social and development needs of the local communities.

Honourable members,

We note that our road infrastructure is not the best in the country. We should ask ourselves whether the problem is the calibre of the work that Government manages to buy or the lack of resources to ensure that the public service provides quality services to our people. The quality of workmanship cannot be compromised upon and the right people with the right capacity must always be employed to provide these services.

Honourable Speaker,

Our community development initiatives have and continue to close the social distance between the leadership of this province and her people. We have to continue with defining the partnerships which should be explored amongst departments and between government and other sectors of society to ensure that our rural development initiatives make the desired impact. In doing so we shall achieve our dream of sustainable rural communities and food security for all. Surely democracy without breathable air, potable water and soil to till is empty and meaningless.

Honourable members,

As an ANC-led government, we love our youth, both men and women. We wish only the best for them. The youth have an equal responsibility to ensure that their youthfulness is invested in worthy activities that can make them better people. No form of pride can be derived from spending the whole night drinking alcohol or exposing themselves to drugs and all sorts of criminality. These retrogressive practices and or lifestyles are the cause to gender-based violence and sexually transmitted diseases and could render us a country without a future.

Honourable Speaker,

We are encouraged by the unfolding changes in the mainstreaming of integrated youth development through the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA). These reorganisation processes will be the cornerstone of sustainable youth development. With the youth co-operatives currently being implemented in different municipalities of our province, we urge the private sector to also come forth and use the skills of these young people.

Honourable Speaker,

We reiterate the words of former ANC President, Cde Oliver Tambo, “a country that does not value its youth does not believe in its each future”. As a province we are going to host a Youth Summit in June this year i.e, during the Youth Month, to focus on a myriad of challenges that our youth face. These

include, but not limited to, redefinition of the concept of youth, the role of youth in the SADC region and other parts of the globe, youth unemployment and broadening of the youth skills base, access to education, youth entrepreneurship and the role of youth in the fight against HIV/AIDS. The Summit will produce a clear youth development plan which would guide both the private and public sector in our province on how to continue with the work of mainstreaming youth development.

Honourable speaker,

We are committed to building a human resource base in our province and we are in the process of review the North West Government Bursaries to focus on scarce skills. Thus far 36 new bursaries have been allocated at the tune of R12 million to young people who must pursue paths relevant to the needs of our government and our people. All departments have developed workplace skills plans that will enable us to re-skill our human resources for retention purposes and for contribution to the national skills pool of resourceful persons.

Honourable members,

We note the important breakthroughs that were made in facilitating Outcome Based Management (OBM) in the province. The next step of integrating OBM with the MTEF 2011/12 and strategic plans for departments and municipalities are far advanced. With the support from the Presidency and National

Treasury, our planning systems can only ensure that our services address the core of what is of concern to our people.

Honourable members,

All departments and municipalities are also tasked to strengthen their monitoring and evaluation capacity and put systems in place to produce credible performance reporting in the context of the outcome based management plans and delivery agreements entered into.

Honourable members,

We note, with appreciation, the advent of the New Growth Path (NGP). The key aspects of the New Growth Path are to make sure that there is stimulation of robust economic growth and that more of our people are absorbed in the labour market. The NGP alone will not be a solution if it is not accompanied by innovation and active involvement of our people in various economic activities. This will be more so, given the global financial meltdown from which South Africa is still recovering.

Honourable members,

The development of our province should be subject to continuous review. The Provincial Growth and Development Strategy have to be relevant to the challenges of the time. Honourable Members should appreciate the efforts that are being made to review it and expect the outcome of the review to

provide a detailed and realisable picture of where the province is heading. The review of the PGDS is set to take place on the 15th-16th March 2011. The review should pay particular attention to meaningful approaches to socio-economic strategies.

Whilst the implementation of small scale poverty relief projects is necessary, focus should also be towards long term development plans, strategies and tactics. The existing Municipality Integrated Development Plans should creatively be used by local government to address the socio-economic challenges at local level aligned to provincial initiatives.

Honourable Speaker,

In living up to the priority of creating decent work and sustainable livelihood, our provincial government has launched ***Iterele*** Job creation and contract development initiatives. Our aim is to create 10 000 labour intensive jobs in the next financial year. Through this programme, we hope the youth, women and people living with disabilities will receive preferential opportunities.

Fellow citizens of the North West Province,

All government departments and their State-owned enterprises (SOEs) must fill in all funded vacant posts, within prescribed timelines of the public service. We must fill these posts with persons who are suitably qualified and are committed to their people and country. As Ernesto Guevara once said “a *true*

revolutionary is guided by the deepest feelings of love”, and to this, Honourable Speaker, may I add that love for their people and their country.

We need to look at ways of integrating all programmes and projects of all 3 spheres of government, for greater socio and economic impact. For us to achieve the intended objectives of the new growth path, we need to speedily realign and review our provincial Growth development strategy. We must create conditions for our economy to grow to enable us to deliver jobs and the 5 priorities to our people. We know that Government cannot do this alone and accordingly invite the private sector along, Together we can do more!

Fellow citizens of our province,

We are also mindful of the need to explore the use of renewable energy as a way of preserving our planet and also reducing the costs of energy consumption by both households and industries. A detailed plan on the use of renewable energy would be made available within the next six months.

Honourable members,

The province needs to intensify its destination marketing programme and ensure that the growth of the tourism industry is also experienced in the Province. To that end, it is imperative for the Province to enhance its product offering and experiences so as to attract more local and foreign tourists.

It is in this context that we are going to resuscitate the heritage park, finalise the Vaalkop Conservancy as a project with private land owners and also finalise the transfer of the of Ga-Rankuwa Hotel School to Gauteng and work on the return of the Fifth Casino License to the Province.

Honourable members,

We have identified the facilitation of access to business opportunities, financing, and provision of affordable infrastructure for SMMEs that have the want to operate in Small Industries as a key priority to creating jobs. Twelve million rands (R12 million) have already been transferred to the relevant state entity to assist with SMME development. We also intend to spend R10 million rands on light industries and two million rands (R2million) on car wash, sisal and wild silk projects.

Honourable Speaker,

We are mindful of the ongoing dismantling and erection of centre pivots, designing plans, debushing for maintenance of canals, supply and installation of irrigation pumps in the Taung area. The partnership, we are establishing and the national ministry of Agriculture is intended to put an end to our water challenges.

Honourable members,

We intend to broaden our partnership with the farming community so that the levels of production in our province can respond to the immediate needs of our communities. It is therefore critical that both Government and the farming community have a common conception of the economic challenges that face our province. We intend to chase away hunger and to create more jobs in agro processing.

Honourable members,

We shall provide further support to the cooperatives that are operating in Matlosana, Naledi, Rustenburg and Mahikeng. This will ensure that our youth are provided with the requisite skills that can enable them play a meaningful role in the socio-economic development of the province.

Honourable Speaker,

We intend to pay more attention to the implementation of the integrated transport strategy. We wish to take this opportunity to congratulate the National Department of Rural Development and Land Reform and PPC Dwaalboom respectively for collaborating with government to construct the roads that connects Maatlametlo and Mokgalwaneng. We have concluded agreements with PPC, Limpopo province for the road that connects Dwaalboom and Limpopo Province. R75 million has been set aside for this road constructions.

Honourable members,

We are going to complete the construction of the ten roads that were suspended and also built three more roads including the long awaited Tlakgameng road in the Dr. Ruth Segomotsi Mompati District. We will soon start construction on the road between Schweizer – Reneke and Wolmaranstad. The Extended Public Works projects will include maintenance of road, filling of potholes, etc. As government we shall spent R33 million to support the efforts of municipalities to fix potholes and improve roads infrastructure.

Honourable members,

Thirty million rands (R30 million) has been set aside to attend to the medium term challenges of the Mahikeng Airport. We intend to unveil a clear programme that will enable us to respond to the long term challenges of the airport revamping project.

Honourable members,

We are going to stop at nothing to complete some of the uncompleted projects in the province. These include the Infrastructure projects at the Mini Garona offices in Dr. Ruth Segomotsi Mompati District (Vryburg). We are also going to implement government building renovation programme and R45 million will be spent in this regard.

Honourable Speaker,

The maintenance of infrastructure is being given priority this year.

Honourable speaker,

The revamping of the capital city, Mahikeng, shall include improvement of the Parks and Recreational Facilities, renovation of the Old Historical Schools, declaring war on potholes in the townships and improving tourist attraction areas. An additional R25million has been allocated for the revamping project. The project is set to create 5000 jobs.

Honourable Members,

We must strive to ensure that we live to the expectations of the 2014 Clean Audit project. The Provincial Government will be finalizing appointment of specialists before the end of this financial period who will ensure that all accounting standards are met by departments and sound financial procedures and internal control systems are followed and adhered to. All departments shall exercise good corporate governance in the manner they provide services.

Honourable Speaker,

All departments shall develop data accumulation and analysis mechanisms which will provide credible and outcomes-oriented reports at all times. The

quality of reporting, accountability and compliance to relevant legislation and prescripts will be improved.

Honourable Speaker,

We need to ensure that supply chain management processes are reliable and accessible. To this end, a procurement reform programme has been embarked upon, which will ensure the review of the current supply chain management policy frameworks to promote the efficiency and effectiveness in the usage of scarce resources. This process will in the main attend to the supply chain management challenges that encourage non-compliance with legislation, wastage, fraud and corruption in the municipalities, departments and public entities. It will also attend effectively to the things that clog the system and thus disabling it from honouring payments to the service providers on time which is within thirty days.

Honourable Speaker,

We intent to introduce the ***no plan, no budget, use it or loose it principle*** to address under-spending, encourage and enforce improvement in spending and commitment to service delivery.

Honourable speaker,

We are committed to clean public administration and the eradication of corruption and fraudulent activities. We have dealt with many cases. These

include 127 cases that have been prosecuted, 33 cases returned to the Special Investigation Unit for further investigations, 180 cases which are still investigated and prosecuted, 96 cases that have been received and are to be investigated. It is mentioning here that 244 cases have been carried over from last financial year. Given the complexity of these investigations and the need for offenders to face the wrath of the law, we intend doing everything within our abilities to ensure that the cases are brought to finality by next financial year.

Honourable Speaker,

The province will as part of the National roll out plan, implement the Administrative Adjudication of Road Traffic Offences (AARTO) Act by March 2011. The implementation of the Act will have positive effects for the road offenders as it will promote quality, safety and discipline on the roads. It will discourage road traffic contraventions and facilitate the adjudication of road traffic infringements using the new demerit points system. The new demerit points system will also remove offenders from the roads through suspension or revoking their driving licenses.

Honourable Speaker,

I note with appreciation, that Crime levels in the North West went down by 22,7% except for domestic violence. Whilst these numbers are positive, we

must continue to foster an environment that is safe and free of crime for our people.

Honourable members,

To buttress our crime prevention strategies, four police stations, in Klipgat, Jouberton, Amalia and Hebron will be officially opened during 2011. These police stations will have to attend to community challenges. The reports of collusion between police officers and criminals should be a thing of the past. Our law enforcement institutions should occupy, deservedly, the frontline in the defence of our communities.

Honourable Speaker,

In order for the department to ensure maximization of revenue collection and ensuring that the revenue target is met a PAY-FINE ON-LINE strategy has been introduced. The service is currently provided in partnership with a service provider. We intend to use internal resources to provide the service as early as the contract with the service provider expires. This should enable us to save resources and redirect them to other priority areas.

Honourable members,

We appreciate the sterling work which our Provincial Commissioner, Ms Zukiswa Mbombo, has done for our province. May all other police men and women learn from her and also strive to make their province and their country proud. We salute you, madam.

Honourable Speaker,

Since education is the foundation on which every society's development is built, we must do our utmost to create a good learning and teaching environment at all our schools. In pursuance of this, we are going to eradicate all mud schools and provide decent shelter to all our learners, rid our schools of gangsterism and drugs, provide learner transport to schools and ensure that the schools nutrition programmes run desirably.

Honourable members,

As the provincial government, we have thus far identified schools that required urgent renovation and more financial resources. The MEC of the relevant Department will elaborate on this matter in his budget speech.

Honourable speaker,

As provincial government we are pleased to announce that as part of our response to storm damaged schools in the province, R17 million has been committed to reconstruct these schools in the next financial year.

We are also pleased to announce partnership of government and Impala Platinum, PPC and ARM in building and renovating several schools in our province.

Honourable members,

The creation of the new Department of Social Development, Women, Children and People with Disability is a further testimony to our commitment to attend to the unique needs of the special groups in our province. We are quite aware that the interests of people living with disability, the aged and women get easily compromised when pitted against other pressing needs in our communities.

Honourable Speaker,

On health, we are guided by the Ten Point Plan in the fight against diseases and to improve the health profile of our nation. We need to strengthen social compact within the context of Public Private Partnership (PPP) for better health outcomes. All health stakeholders, our communities, governance structures and the private sector must be involved.

I am pleased to announce that the mining sector is involved in the development of health infrastructure in the Province. Anglo Platinum and Xstrata Mines have offered to build clinics for Sesfikile and Bethani communities. Sun City will also build a clinic for Lesetlheng community. We are finalizing terms for these projects. Our focus is on strengthening Primary Health Care. We are emphasizing quality of care in all our health facilities. President Jacob Zuma has said during the State of the Nation Address that government will soon be releasing a policy document on National Health Insurance (NHI) for public engagement.

Honourable Speaker,

We commit ourselves to ensuring that we increase the proportion of facilities providing Basic Antenatal Care (BANC); increase the proportion of pregnant women tested through health care provider-initiated Counselling and testing for all pregnant women; improve patient care and satisfaction and expand access to home based care and community health worker services.

Honourable members,

We appreciate the leadership role played by both the President and the Minister of Health in conscientising South Africans about the need to be tested so that they can know their status with regard to HIV/AIDS.

As a province we are progressing well with the Massive HIV Counselling and Testing (HCT) campaign which calls upon all South Africans to know their HIV status in order to access treatment early and reduce new HIV. Since the campaign started, we have counselled 637 681 and tested 504 064 people for HIV. We have also screened 525 616 people for TB. Though I am pleased that the general HIV prevalence in the province is coming down, a lot still needs to be done to reach out to all our communities. We are quickly resolving challenges at the Mmabatho Medical Depot. I want nothing else but a zero (0%) stock-out rate of antiretroviral and TB drugs.

We are improving and upgrading our health facilities through the Hospital Revitalization Programme and revitalization of health physical infrastructure in general.

In responding to the President's call for job creation we are planning to build one of the biggest revitalization projects in our province which is the new Bophelong Psychiatric Hospital. This project will create temporary and permanent jobs and more details will be released in the next financial year. As a way of improving the human resource challenge we have a plan in the North West province to produce 1592 health professionals in the next five years.

Honourable Speaker,

In intensifying our efforts to fight the HIV/AIDS scourge, we will be calling for nominations of capable people to serve in the HIV/AIDS Council within the next (2) two weeks. We have also identified a farm which will be used for vegetation for the HIV/AIDS affected people, orphans and the school nutrition programme.

Honourable Speaker,

We also intend to expedite the construction of Brits Hospital. The project's value is R475M and is due to be completed in June 2012. It has already created approximately 180 jobs. We are also forging ahead with the construction of Tlhabane Community Health Centre (CHC). The project is 95% complete and due to be completed by the end of this financial year. The value of the project is R108 Million and has created approximately 102 jobs.

Honourable members,

Honourable Speaker,

We are proud of the role which the Royal Bafokeng has played in ensuring that our province hosts the World Cup with the dignity it deserved.

Honourable members,

The FIFA Soccer World Cup made us aware that sports is not an underbelly of any society but also one of the critical means of achieving social cohesion. We must improve the current sports infrastructure and generate a competitive and entertaining sports spirit which will give our youth lesser or no reasons to indulge in self-destructing practices. We are proud that our school sports programme is already off the ground. We are ever prouder that our sporting icons have agreed to mentor children in different sporting codes.

Honourable members,

We urge our youth to use the multi-purpose centres and the Mmabana facilities optimally. We want Mmabana to return to its former constructive role and make strong links with other stars or products of Mmabana.

Honourable Speaker,

We must ensure that the electricity backlog is reduced and that all our people benefit from all basic services as promised by their Government.

Honourable Speaker,

We have identified three municipalities for support with vehicles for Fire Services i.e Ramotshere, Ditsobotla and Naledi Local Municipalities. This is part of our efforts to support these struggling municipalities

Honourable members,

We have developed a disaster management plan. Currently, processes are on to deploy capable personnel and identify a central place for the physical infrastructure.

Honourable Members,

The Department of Local Government together with municipalities has initiated community work programme in 6 municipalities as part of the effort to accelerate service delivery which will focus on waste management, operations and maintenance. The projects, whose objectives will be to create jobs and improve access to free basic services, are expected to start in the next financial year. We anticipate that approximately 500 jobs will be created.

Honourable Speaker,

We defer to traditional leadership. We value their role as leaders in society. We should continue to strengthen our partnership with the traditional leaders

so that they can participate actively in local government and define their important role in ensuring a better life for all in traditional communities We commit ourselves to doing our utmost to resolving the current challenges which the traditional leaders and their communities face.

Honourable Speaker,

We should, in this financial year, see the products of the turnaround strategy that were developed for the local governance sphere.

Honourable members,

Financial experts from the Development Bank of Southern Africa have been deployed to 10 municipalities to assist with Annual Financial Statement (AFS). Preparations and audit functions will go a long way in building technical capacity to many struggling municipalities thereby enabling them to adhere to standards of good governances and accounting principles.

Honourable speaker,

Pursuant to the integrated human settlement in our province, we have reviewed the provincial spatial development framework. The provincial land use bill and regulations for land use management are at the finalisation phases.

We believe that these processes shall assist us in unlocking the old blocked housing projects and enable us to provide decent settlement with amenities to our people.

Honourable Speaker

We are going to implement the North West Water Provisioning and Management Plan, as a comprehensive plan, that will ensure that water supply to both industry and households is improved in a sustainable manner. We are also working closely with the water boards and National Department of Water Affairs to resolve water problems in Setlagole, Dinokana and Hartbeespoortdam and the Dr Ruth Mompati District Municipality. As the provincial government we have set aside R50 million for water and sanitation projects to assist (seven) 7 municipalities. We hope this will go a long way to resolving the water crisis. We need to start with our water harvesting initiatives as part of water conservation management in our province.

Honourable Speaker,

I would like to take this opportunity to call upon all the people of the North-West to make sure that they are registered voters and their names appear on the voters' roll. Notably, there is a second chance for the qualifying voters who have not registered to vote yet, to do so at their Municipal Electoral Offices. We urge them to cease the availed opportunity to register so that they

can be counted amongst millions of our people who continue to shape the outlook of our democratic governance.

Honourable Speaker,

We are working towards the establishment of a Planning Commission. The Commission would coordinate our planning systems and ensure that our performance is guided towards the goals we have set for ourselves. A capable Commissioner has already been appointed, who shall with our support, centralise planning in the province.

Honourable members,

The Commission will also ensure that the backlog in infrastructure development is addressed in a more coordinated manner. We trust that a more structured and focussed implementation of the Infrastructure Delivery Improvement Programme (IDIP) in the province will be realised. We hope that the Infrastructure Delivery Improvement Programme (IDIP) will be adopted by municipalities as a means of enhancing planning and spending on Municipal Infrastructure Grants. This initiative is also aimed at streamlining coordination and integration of the infrastructure planning and implementation in support of the Provincial economic strategy.

Honourable speaker,

In the context of the establishment of the provincial planning commission, we will set up a monitoring and evaluation unit in the premier office that will be charged with evaluation of performance of departments. I am pleased to announce that in order to overcome the challenges which exist between local and provincial government, the inter-governmental relations and North West provincial co-ordinating units shall be revived.

Honourable Speaker,

We want to immortalise our heroes. Our children must never wonder why we failed to preserve their heritage. We want to encourage writers, poets to keep the names of Modiri Molema, Sol Plaatje alive. We are proud to announce another partnership; Anglo platinum mines is joining hands with government to develop Taung Skull site.

Honourable members, I urge all public servants to refocus their energies to the improvement of our people's life. I trust that they shall ensure that:

- The scourge of corruption is uprooted at all their service points.
- Managers manage with firmness, fairness and foresight.
- The workplace is made more enjoyable and productive to all employees.

- Ill-discipline and misdemeanour of any sort is confronted and addressed firmly and speedily.
- Corruption must be fought everywhere, in the Executive Council, Legislature and in the public and private sectors. It must be fought fearlessly by everyone.

Political stability is a prerequisite for economic growth and development we note with the return to sanity and respect to our province.

Fellow citizens of the North West,

We are pleased to note that the ruling party has just emerged from its conference. We congratulate Rre Supra Mahumapelo, a former member of this house for his election as Provincial Chairperson of the North West ANC. Similarly, United Christian Democratic Party has elected Ms. Mavis Matladi, also a former member of this house, as its leader. We congratulate these patriots of the North West and hope that they will continue to serve the people of this province with commitment and distinction. We further urge all political parties in the province to strive for unity amongst themselves so that they can duly add value to the dignity and development of our province.

Honourable members,

As we ponder the challenges that lie ahead we are comforted by the word of former ANC President and Nobel Peace prize laureate, Chief Albert Luthuli, when he said: 'Let no difficulties and temporary set-backs in our struggle

discourage us and our vision of a united democratic South Africa; a South Africa where human relations shall rest on the firm foundation of equality, friendship and respect for human dignity”.

Honourable Speaker,

We shall not retreat at the sight of challenges but instead forge ahead in a way that will resemble the fighting spirit we demonstrated during our fight for freedom. As we stand proud of our achievements, acknowledging that ours has not been a struggle in vain, we should forever accept that our people’s needs are fast changing and so should be our intervention strategies.

We should always be mindful that the people we serve deserve no lesser than quality services.

We advise every leader in our community to remember that our struggle was won on the basis of unity of purpose and not on the basis of empty posturing.

We invite all leaders of both civil society and the private sector to complement our efforts of improving the lives of our people.

As the leadership of the people, we are the custodians of their hopes and aspirations. We are the face of the free society they have always yearned and fought for. In our operations they should see a response to their actual needs; a genuine commitment to making theirs a worthy struggle for a better life.

Thank You!