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Speech by MEC for Public Works, Roads and Transport, Mahlakeng Mahlakeng, during the sod turning ceremony and handing over to contractors three more road projects for rehabilitation in Mafikeng on Thursday, March 24, 2011...

Date: Thursday, March 24, 2011

- Programme Director
- Honourable Premier of the North West Province
- Honourable Members of the Portfolio Committee on Public Works, Roads and Transport
- Executive Mayor of Ngaka Modiri Molema: Cllr Pinky Mokoto
- Mayor of Mafikeng Local Municipality: Cllr D Jabanyane
- Ladies and Gentlemen

Good morning to you all, and welcome to this sod turning ceremony to keep the momentum, in our quest to revitalize our capital city of the province, Mafikeng.

• Honourable Premier, your call has not fallen on deaf ears. When you made a call to all of us in November last year, and issued a challenge on what we were doing or planning to give the seat of the North West Provincial government a face-lift: We sprung into action immediately.

This we did, not because as a department of Public Works, Roads and Transport, we wanted to look smart, by taking the lead in implementing your marching orders: But because we feel we are obliged to do so.

The urgency of our response, Honourable Premier, was also informed by what we see. What the residents of Mafikeng see and also talk about every day. And also, the impression people from outside this province take with them after visiting or doing business. The facts are known to all of us, because our eyes cannot lie to us.

• Ladies and Gentlemen:
Even if you are a tenant, renting a house, you make it a point that it is cleaned at all times, and its surroundings kept neat. This is what we are doing. You cannot choose, not to clean the house, stay in squalid conditions and shift the blame on the landlord for the filth, just because you pay rent every month.

This simple analogy is very relevant, and applicable to our situation as the provincial government with offices in this city of ours.

- There is no time for an argument about what the local municipality of Mafikeng and Ngaka Modiri Molema should, or should not be doing.

This town is the capital city of the North West, and it is the seat of the provincial government.

It is a workstation of all provincial departments, the legislature, the high court and other parastatals.

Therefore, we have a duty to form a partnership with any sphere of government.

To assist where possible, and in whatever way, in order to ensure that we preserve what we have as the people of the province and improve the lives of our people.

- To this end, Honourable Premier:

My department pledged R33 million, which we raised from several programmes internally, without sacrificing service delivery.

This was our contribution towards the revitalization of Mafikeng and Mmabatho. It is just a drop in the ocean, but half a loaf is better than no bread at all. Following consultations we had with our municipal counterparts, we chose to begin with the rehabilitation of one of the busiest streets.

Indeed, work is progressing very well, on Ngaka Modiri Molema road, as evidenced by everybody, including the critics. I am very optimistic, this project will be completed within the next two months, and a fraction of the 250 job opportunities we said we will create, will also be realized.

Today, we are gathered here to keep the momentum of what we have pledged to do with the R33 million, and to be seen to be part of the revitalization movement of our provincial seat of government.

We will turn the sod in a few minutes, as a symbolic gesture, to mark the beginning of the rehabilitation of three more roads projects, which we will also handover to appointed contractors.

- These are:

Onkgopotse Tiro. This is a 2.4km road which will be recycled plus paving on the side.

Joe Slovo: This is 1.9km project that required patchwork and resealing.

Moshoeshoe Road including a portion of **Sekame Road:** This 2.1km project will be recycled.

I am informed that work on these three projects, will be completed in the next three months.

- To the contractors we have appointed to carry out these tasks:
We expect from you, to deliver quality work and deliver on time.

It will do you a lot of harm, to cut corners, using substandard and cheap material, which will only last for a few weeks.

We do not want to come back here after the first rains, to repair or do work which you should have done properly in the first place.

Ensure that when you deliver these projects, you can also look back and let others judge you and your company, by the quality of work you can deliver to the people of this province.

- Honourable Premier:

Immediately after we got out of the starting blocks and contractors were seen to be hard at work on Ngaka Modiri Molema road:

Suddenly, people who claim to understand how best to run government, than your administration, started a misinformation campaign. An assortment of strange and bizarre analysis was the hallmark of that campaign. We will not grace these unfortunate utterances, by responding to them.

The people of the city of Mafikeng will be the judges.

The overnight analysts I referred to, clearly have never driven on Joe Slovo, Onkgopotse Tiro or Moshoeshe streets in the recent past.

We do not need a referendum for our intervention, safe to say, in spite of the challenges known to all of us;

Our municipality has prioritized streets and roads for rehabilitation purposes. We are mindful, not to duplicate or interrupt their plans. How can intervention by government, to assist in the revamping of its provincial capital city, suddenly translate into fiscal dumping?

Just to quote one of the leaders of a small political party which I shall not even mention. This is not a game, but a serious contribution that has to be done!

It just demonstrates how opportunistic, blind and confused, these so called leaders are. They will forever refuse- for as long as it does not come from them- to see the good in us, as leaders in government, led by the African National Congress.

They have nothing to offer, they have offered nothing to the people of Mafikeng and the North West as a whole, expect sweet talk and words that sound so great, like music, yet empty as a shell.

I thank you