



**tourism**

Department:  
Tourism  
North West Provincial Government  
**REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

## **OPENING ADDRESS**

**BY MEC DESBO MOHONO-DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM**

**DURING THE TOURISM MONTH LAUNCH**

**CELEBRATIONS HELD AT MARIKANA-NKANENG**

**VILLAGE OUTSIDE RUSTENBURG**

**BOJANALA DISTRICT**

**ON THE, 8-10<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2015**

**Programme Director**

**Bojanala District Mayor- Cllr Lois Diremelo**

**Honorable Councilors Present**

**Private Sector Role Players**

**Mining Houses and Unions**

**Media Houses Present**

**Comrades and Friends**

Ladies and Gentlemen it is a rare privilege to speak to the people of Marikana and its surroundings during this Tourism and Heritage Month Celebrations. Our gathering here today will not weigh much if we do not remember the thirty nine (39) lives we have lost during the sad massacre almost three (3) years ago. We will forever remember them and what they stood and fought for as miners. As government we are saying you did not sweat and fight for nothing, we will forever make sure that your remaining loved ones are comforted and consoled at all times. The ground on which we stand on today has a legacy that was left behind by our brothers, fathers, uncles, grandfathers, giants whose umbilical cords will forever be buried deep in the belly of the mines they have dug with their own bare hands but without enough recompense to better their lives and that of their loved ones.

One cannot and should not live in the squalors and the drain infested environment while toiling on daily basis for years. Today marks the official launch of the Tourism Month celebrations in the North West Province, and as a one year old Department we saw it fit to be with the people of Marikana. As government we fully understand and acknowledge that democracy is based on the principle of representation. We also understand that you cannot represent more than half of the population of the country if that population does not see itself, and not feeling itself as a decision maker unto your precious live. People of Marikana have always been vocal about their living conditions, unemployment, education, electricity, and many other social ills that are witnessed in this mining settlement. But as a caring Department we are of the opinion that "Nothing in Marikana, without the people of Marikana".

Our Provincial month theme in Tourism for 2015 is **"A Re Yeng Bokone Bophirima where a Million New Experiences Lie a Shot Left Away"**. The Department will be rolling out a number of activities throughout the Province inclusive will be the Official Opening of the Dr. Kenneth Kaunda Hotel School, Provincial Lilizela Awards, Isikhumbuzo Heritage Celebration, Tourism Round Table Meetings, Tourism Service

Excellence Programme, World Tourism Day Celebrations that will be held in Limpopo Province later this month. As a Department we form part and parcel of the of the ACT viewpoint, which is the main peddler of our economical goals and intentions. The other two are Agriculture and Culture also tasked with the solemn mandate of making sure that Villages, Townships and Small Dorpies are prioritized. Today we are here in Marikana in trying to say to our people that they are in our future plans henceforth we saw it fit to come and launch our Tourism Month Long activities.

Tourism is but the new gold Ladies and Gentlemen, and our intentions are quite very clear. We have brought hope and self belief in Marikana. We can all see what is happening in most of the mining towns across the country, with retrenchment and closure of many mines. Now we are saying let's all sit down and see how best we can guide our people into becoming entrepreneurs and tap into the industry that was previously monopolized by people with less interests into our people. Again we are making sure as much as we celebrate and enjoy our heritage, how best can the Marikana environment benefit those who are showing interest in the Tourism and Hospitality industry.

Ladies and Gentlemen our visit here also is about creating awareness about the value and the importance of tourism in trying to uplift and push back the frontiers of social ills that we see on daily basis in our media platforms. Lastly one of our key objective is that we are aware that everybody in the North West have their say when coming to how Tourism should be run and managed, we respect that, but we are saying become our marketing agent in positioning the province as the number one Tourism Destination. Word of Mouth is the best marketer and it has been proven that it works wonders in promoting our destinations and products.

Now we are here to plead with the community at large to help us to push and position our **"A re yeng Bokone Bophirima"** brand property to its greatest heights. I am aware that in Marikana there are lot of different people from other countries, now the onus is on us to make sure that we sell the rich history of our province and our folklore in making sure that this will spread and bring more tourists in Marikana, Dinkgwaneng in Taung, Ga-Ditshwene in Zeerust, Manyane Game Reserve, Vredefort Dome, Baberspan Birds Sanctuary and many more other attractions that continue to define our lovely province.

Marikana is not your ordinary settlement; it is internationally acclaimed and is poised with immense tourism potential. The Department other main responsibility is to discern and discover tourism attractions across the province. Now together with our Provincial Administration, we have to come up with ways and mechanisms of positioning Marikana as a finished sightseeing invention. Now for us to be able to implement these ideas we need people with gutzpah and the hunger to improve their environment and who better to choose from than our women and youth. We must understand that most men go to the belly of the earth very early in Marikana, and the question is what happens to the youth and women? Clearly we need to do something, the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) tells us it is time to look closer at gender representation in the Hospitality assiduousness while aligning their programmes with the youth accustomed one's.

We note that no country in the world has closed the overall gender gap, comprising of economic, political, educational and health aspects in less than 21 years of democracy. We still need to move with speed especially in Tourism in making sure that our previously disadvantaged populace is prioritised besides the accolades. Young people must drive social cohesion to build communities that are healthy and thriving.

This includes a sustained dialogue and partnership action with relevant catalyst agents to ensure that they are well integrated, skilled and most importantly feel a sense of belonging. As Tourism we will continue to liberate our people from the continuing bondages of poverty, deprivation, suffering, gender and any other sort of discrimination they are faced with on their daily basis. This should be the inspiration that guides our people during this time and beyond. In a moving tribute written by the late Comrade Walter Sisulu to his late friend, mentor and comrade Utata Nelson Mandela he said "In a world of the powerful and powerless, among decision makers and marginalised, among children, youth and adults we have to make sure that we contribute to the emancipation of our people and in betterment of their future or else we might as well pack our bags and go, because we will be irrelevant to the battle of saving our people". I am saying the Tourism vision cannot be implemented by our fifth administration alone, nor can the private sector do so alone. Stand up and do your bit in making sure that Marikana becomes a number one tourist attraction in the entire World.

**KE A LEBOGA. I THANK YOU.**

**MEC-DESBO MOHONO**

**DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM NORTH WEST PROVINCE**