

**SPEECH BY MEC FOR PUBLIC WORKS-HON MR. HOWARD YAWA,
MPL AT THE FUNDRAISING DINNER OF THE METHODIST CHURCH,
KANANA SOCIETY AT THE ORKNEY GOLF CLUB-NORTH WEST-
SATURDAY 27 NOVEMBER 2004**

Programme Director

Rev Thibane-Circuit Minister for Klerksdorp

Reverend Alla

Dr Siphon Gura-Chairperson of Project 40 and esteemed members of
your committee

Distinguished guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

Comrades and Friends

Programme Director I am humbled and honoured to be invited by
your congregation share with you this auspicious occasion and to
address your fundraising dinner.

When a powerful partner such as yourselves calls on us to avail
ourselves, we have no alternative but to heed your divine calling
because it could well be that it is a call from the Almighty himself
therefore we should avail ourselves.

We have no alternative but to heed your call because South Africa is
free today because of the invaluable contribution made by the
church in the struggle against the system of apartheid, which was
itself an antithesis of the teachings of Christ.

The struggle against apartheid produced many courageous Christian
leaders and activists who were at the forefront of our liberation
movement the likes of Oom Beyers Naude, Arch Bishop Tutu, Sister
Bernard Nqube, and Reverend Frank Chikane to name but a few.
They resisted the system and ideology of apartheid, whose
theological justification was declared a heresy.

Many Christians, leaders and ordinary people, made enormous
sacrifices and paid with their lives so that this country could be
free. All of us will forever be indebted to these and many other
heroes and heroines of the struggle for the freedom, democracy and
justice we enjoy today.

While we are mindful that today we are faced with many challenges, including the urgent need to improve the standard of living of all our people, eradicate poverty, close the gap between the rich and the poor, and renew the moral fibre of our society.

In this regard, the church, which is one of the central custodians of the nation's morality, faces the challenge to continue to participate in the important work of rebuilding our family and community ethos and values.

Clearly, one of the biggest threats to these values is the unacceptably high level of poverty and inequality, which occasion the fragmentation of families and communities, contribution to the weakening of our social cohesion and the fulfillment of the individual.

For historic reasons, our country is characterised by two parallel economies, the First and the Second. The First Economy is modern, produces the bulk of our country's wealth, and is integrated within the global economy.

The Second Economy (or the Marginalised Economy) is characterised by underdevelopment, contributes little to the GDP, contains a big percentage of our population, incorporates the poorest of our rural and urban poor, is structurally disconnected from both the First and the global economy, and is incapable of self-generated growth and development.

To respond to the challenges of the Second economy, the ANC led government resolved that the development of the Marginalised Economy requires the infusion of capital and other resources by the democratic state to ensure the integration of this economy within the developed sector.

Through active partnership with provincial and local governments and other social partners including the church, government has identified key strategies to meet the growth and development challenges of the Second Economy, these include:

- The Integrated and Sustainable Rural Development Programme (ISRDP);
- The Urban Renewal Programme (URP);
- The Expanded Public Works Programme;
- A major boost to infrastructure spending, with an emphasis on the underdeveloped regions and communities;
- Further support to local government's preparation and implementation of Integrated Development Plans (IDPs);
- The development of SMMEs and cooperatives, in both urban and rural areas;
- Black economic empowerment;
- Special programmes for women's economic development;
- The expansion of micro-credit to enable the poorest to engage in productive economic activity;
- The incorporation of the unemployed within the Skills Development Programme, especially as implemented by the Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs);
- The continued restructuring of our system of education so that it gives our youth the necessary skills to engage in economic activities of benefit to them;
- Agrarian reform, including a Farmers Support Programme and forestry development in the interests of communities; and,
- The creation of the echelon of Community Development Workers to help build social cohesion in the Second Economy, and to help to develop strategies and forge links that can transform the Second Economy.

Government made the determination that the advances we have made with regard to the First Economy, during the First decade of our liberation, have put us in a position to meet the objective fundamental to our strategic outlook, to reduce the numbers of those dependant on social grants, by enabling them to pull themselves out of poverty by engaging in gainful economic activity and exercising their right to human dignity.

Guided by the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), our vision is to build a society that is truly united, non-racial, non-sexist and democratic. Central to this is a single and integrated economy that benefits all.

As President Thabo Mbeki said, "Moral regeneration also means inculcating in us and our youth that service to the people, selfless commitment to the common good, is more valuable than selfish pursuit of material rewards. Productive investment is more valuable than aimless gambling in markets for derivatives. Payment for honest work is more fulfilling and sustainable than theft."

As government we remain convinced that the Christian Church, like all the other faiths in our country, has the possibility to make a critical contribution to the achievement of the goals of national reconstruction and development.

We are certain that the people's contract to create jobs and fight poverty will be enormously weakened if it does not include within it the Christian Church and the other faiths, pursuing the goals that we have set ourselves as a people.

Your government, the ANC led government regards the church as one of its principal partners as we strive to improve the lives of all our people, especially the poor. Accordingly, we urge the church to continue to use its capacity and infrastructure positively to impact on the process of transformation and change.

As we build a people centred, caring society, we call on the Church and all of our people to support the 16 Days of Activism Campaign for No Violence against Women and Children by exposing those who abuse women and children in our homes, in our workplaces and in our society.

We should blow the whistle on abusers. In the same vain we should reject the hallucinations of sensationalists who have ran out of ideas and seek credibility and political mileage though the HIV/ Aids pandemic.

In conclusion I wish to share with you an excerpt written and read by the African genius and Poet, Ben Okri to bring in the new millennium in 1999 from the book Mental Flight titled "Turn on your light", it reads:

"The new era is already here:
Here the new time begins anew.

The new era happens every day;
every day is a new world,
a new calendar.
All great moments, all great eras,
are just every moment
and every day writ large.
Thousands of years of loving, failing, killing,
creating, surprising, oppressing,
And thinking ought now to start
To bear fruit, to deliver their rich harvest.
Will you be at the harvest,
among the gatherers of new fruits?
Then you must begin today to remake
your mental and spiritual world,
and join the warriors and celebrants
of freedom, realisers of great dreams.

You can't remake the world
without remaking yourself.
Each new era begins within.
It is an inward event,
with unsuspected possibilities
for inner liberation.
We could use it to turn on
our inward lights.
We could use it to even the dark
and negative things positively.
We could use the new era
to clean our eyes,
to see the world differently,
to see ourselves more clearly.
Only free people can make a free world.
Infect the world with your light.
Help fulfill the golden prophecies.
Press forward the human genius.
Our future is greater than our past."

As your church celebrates 40 years of service, may you turn on the light for People's Contract, for a people united for a better South Africa and a better world.

Ke a leboga.
Enkosi