

**SPEECH BY MEC FOR PUBLIC WORKS-HONOURABLE  
H.D.YAWA, MPL AT THE GALA DINNER OF THE  
MERAUFONG LOCAL MUNICIPALITY AND LAUNCH OF THE  
MERAUFONG SPRING SHOW -21 OCTOBER 2004**

Programme Director

The Executive Mayor of Merafong Local Municipality-

Honourable Councillor D.D.Van Rooyen

The Executive Mayor of the Randfontein District Council-

Honourable Sister Bernard Ncube

Speaker of the Merafong Local Municipality- Honourable  
Councillor Thobile Lethea

Members of the Mayoral Committee

Representatives of Business Sector

Honourable Councillors

Distinguished Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

Even on this glittering and auspicious occasion of the Gala Dinner and the launch of the Merafong Spring Show, we need to reflect on achievements of the First Decade of Freedom and the challenges of the Second Decade of our Freedom and Democracy.

We need to remind ourselves that in 1994 the government of national unity, led by the African National Congress, inherited a country of gross racial inequities with high chronic unemployment. As we celebrate a decade of Freedom and Democracy, we need to celebrate that our economy has grown every year since 1994, an improvement over the 1980s. The budget deficit has been reduced and inflation has declined.

All reasonable and sensible people acknowledge that significant progress has been made in education, health care, housing and providing basic services. Besides these

successes, poverty continues to be widespread, income disparities remain, unemployment has increased and many people lack necessities.

As government notes in its review the successes and challenges in **Towards a Ten Year Review** published in October 2003, "two economies" persist in the country. "The first is an advanced, sophisticated economy, based on skilled labour, which is becoming more globally competitive. The second is a mainly informal, marginalised, unskilled economy, populated by the unemployed and those unemployable in the formal sector."

Although an estimated 1.6 million "sustainable jobs" were created between 1995 and 2002, government aims to create 1 million temporary and intermittent jobs through the Expanded Public Works Programme over the next five years, at a total cost of R15.5 billion.

However Programme Director over the same period that 1.6 million jobs were created, more than 5 million people entered the labour market. That resulted in an increase in the number of unemployed of more than 3 million - meaning South Africa has an unemployment rate ... of about 40 percent, which underlined the need to make economic growth the top priority.

The Second decade of our Freedom and Democracy represents a new dawn in our historic social compact with the people of this country. The ever-present queues of work seekers and the beggar at every intersection on our way to work remind us every waking minute of what stands at the centre of the people's contract - delivery. It is the delivery of jobs and skills that will move the

masses of our people from the Second Economy so that they assume their rightful place in the First Economy.

Our point of departure should be that we could consolidate freedom and democracy by making the lives of our fellow people worthwhile enough for them to appreciate living in a free and democratic society, and to support the ongoing strengthening of that democracy.

Perhaps we should start off by saying that, however important they might be, freedom and democracy are nothing without some basic needs. These needs are health, water, food and shelter. If these are neither in place nor available, all the freedom and all the democracy in the world are meaningless.

Indeed it is government's role to ensure that our people are provided with these needs. It is also true, however, that with all the will in the world government alone can never fully meet all the demands placed upon it

Government's vision to half unemployment by half by 2014 needs the partnership of the business sector. Entrepreneur support and the development of SMME's and the informal sector are critical if our municipalities are to contribute towards the attainment of this vision.

We hope that the people of Carltonville, Khutsong, Wedela, Greenpark, Kokosi and Fochville benefit from the Merafong Spring Show and congratulate the visionary leadership of your esteemed Council Honourable Mayor.

Baie Dankie  
Ke a leboga

