

**SPEECH DELIVERED BY MR.H.D.YAWA, MPL-MEC FOR PUBLIC  
WORKS AT THE HANDOVER AND OFFICIAL OPENING OF  
MATLOSANA SECURE CARE CENTRE ON THURSDAY 26 APRIL  
2007**

Programme Director & Chief Whip of Matlosana Local Municipality -  
Councillor BH Ntsangani

The Acting Executive Mayor of Matlosana Local Municipality-  
Councillor M Mampane

MMC in the Office of the Executive Mayor for the Southern District  
municipality-Councillor MM Mojahi

Honourable Councillors

The Ward Councillor for Ward 15-Councillor MC Dithejane

Members of Ward Committees

Acting Head of Department for the Department of Social  
Development-Mr S Lerumo

Senior Government Officials

Distinguished guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

Former President of the African National Congress, the late Oliver  
Tambo, once said: "Any nation that does not value its youth, does not  
have a future."

On the 4 October 2005, I together with my colleague the MEC for Social Development, Mme Nikiwe Mangqo and the Executive Mayor for Matlosana Local Municipality turned the sod on this site for the commencement of the construction of a secure centre for youth in conflict with the law.

On the eve of the celebration of the 13<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of our liberation and the restoration of the dignity of our people, today's delivery milestone should also remind the people of Matlosana that tomorrow on the 13<sup>th</sup> Freedom Day they too have reason to celebrate 13 years of freedom.

The people of the Southern District also have reason to be proud of the 13 years of progress towards the birth of a new nation.

The Youth of Matlosana and communities in the Southern Region also have reason to celebrate and to be proud because the delivery of Matlosana Secure Care Centre also represents the cherry on the cake that we will be celebrating tomorrow.

In response to overcrowding of juveniles in prisons my department was mandated by the Department of Social development to construct a residential facility which ensures physical, behavioural and emotional containment of young people who are charged with crimes and who are awaiting trial or sentence.

Such a facility according to specifications of the Department of Social Development had to provide an environment, milieu and

programme conducive to the care, safety and health development of each young person while at the same time ensuring the protection of communities.

The delivery of the first of the three secure care centres currently under construction in our Province signifies a determination by the Provincial government to ensure that young people are kept out of jails.

In a month's time we expect to complete the Mafikeng Secure Centre while construction of the Rustenburg Secure Centre has commenced in earnest.

While we are of the view that the social exclusion of youth from the labour market coupled with youth poverty, substance abuse, crime and violence all point to the need to address how best we can improve the socio-economic condition of youth in society.

Although these problems are varied and complex, we also appreciate that these challenges are not unique to South Africa but are also experienced by many other developing countries. Globally one of the most promising initiatives that has emerged is youth participation in community service and volunteerism.

In his State of the Nation Address delivered on the 9 February 2007, President Thabo Mbeki announced the National Youth Service Programme. Provincially the programme was launched by the Premier, Mme Edna Molewa on 25 March 2007 in Mothotlung.

As a department we have committed to engage 500 youth for participation in the programme .I will elaborate on progress and our strategy to achieve the target we have set ourselves when I deliver the Department's Budget Policy Statement on the 10 May 2007.

The delivery of quality infrastructure to our people like this facility is one of the cornerstones of the People's Contract that the ANC-led government has entered with the masses of our people.

This facility was build at a cost of R 20,9 million, i.e. R18, 3 million being the actual construction cost while the rest went towards professional fees. During its construction, 250 people and two sub-contractors were employed on the project throughout the 11 months of the construction period .111 job opportunities benefited local youth from Jouberton.

The “one-stop centre” has the maximum capacity to accommodate 60 children between the ages 13 and 18 years who are in conflict with the law. The facility consists of a Mini-Court, Mini-Police Station, Juvenile court, Social Worker Department, In-House Clinic, In-House kitchen, cafeteria, woodwork, steelwork and electrical workshops and recreational facilities.

The complex also consists of an administration block where the administration of the centre will take place. This is made of offices, conference hall, courtyard, security rooms, storerooms, Strong rooms and bathrooms.

We are encouraged by the enthusiasm with which the community has shown its preparedness to take ownership of the facility. I am informed that about thirty Youth Volunteers from Ward 15 were in the spirit of Letsema involved in a cleaning campaign on site throughout the whole day yesterday.

To our youth we wish to say, you are our future. Stay away from crime. Stay away from substance abuse, crime and violence. We call on you as young people to contribute to the further advance of your country. Community service and volunteerism are effective mechanisms through which you can acquire skills, prepare for active citizenship through civic engagement and a commitment to nation building.

We salute the community of Jouberton for its commitment to a partnership for development and with the handover of this facility; we renew the ANC government's pledge for a national partnership to build a better life for all.

We call on the faith based organisations, business sector, community organisations, Youth and women structure and professionals to be involved with the centre and support the Department of Social Development in its endeavour to strengthen support systems and structures for youth.

In conclusion, it is my honour to hand over keys for the facility to the Acting Executive Mayor for Matlosana Local Municipality, Councillor M. Mapane to officially open the Secure Care Centre on behalf of my colleague, the Honourable MEC for Social Development, Mme N Mangqo.

Ke a leboga.