

**CLOSING REMARKS TO BE DELIVERED BY THE MEC FOR EDUCATION,
MRS REGINAH MHAULE AT THE OCCASION OF THE ENGAGEMENT WITH
STAKEHOLDERS ON HIGHER EDUCATION AT EMALAHLENI MUNICIPALITY
ON 25 NOVEMBER 2009**

Programme Director
Hosting Executive Mayor, Cllr Linah Malatjie
Honourable Premier, DD Mabuza
Minister of Higher Education and Training, Dr Blade Nzimande
Members of the Executive Council present
Members of the Portfolio Committee
Members of Senior Management
Business Community
Representatives from Labour
Political Structures present
Traditional Leadership
Representatives of Youth Formations
Representatives of Educator Formations
Representatives of the National Institute of Higher Learning
Comrades and Friends
Ladies and Gentleman

It gives me great pleasure that we have finally converged to deliberate to find each other on issues of Higher Education and Training for our province.

Much has been said and done, mine is to appreciate the stewardship of both the Premier and the Minister of Higher Education for leading a constructive engagement on an issue that is very close to the hearts and minds of the majority of the people of Mpumalanga.

The platform you have provided enabled the province to speak with one voice on this matter and it add impetus on our collective endeavour to leverage all education programmes in this province.

The issues raised by stakeholders in today's gathering are indeed not new, they were raised before in different platforms, principled decisions were taken and today the province is speaking with one voice, thanks to your comradely spirit premier and the minister.

We are indeed grateful of the manner in which the issues were raised; as such it remains prudent that we all must manage all processes in a manner that would make it easy to implement the issues raised in this meeting.

We must unite in our resolve to improve the quality of education for our province, country and continent. Ours must be to ensure that we do not allow peripheral and side issues to occupy center stage or to divert us from our collective mandate of delivering a world class institution of higher education for the province.

In January 8 statement president of the African National Congress, Cde Jacob Gedleyihlekisa Zuma said

“Education must be elevated from being a departmental issue, or even a government issue, to a societal issue - one that occupies the attention and energy for all our people” A commitment should be made to a Code for Quality Education which describes the responsibilities and discipline required of them – the non-negotiables. It must be seen as a revolutionary act for cadres to subscribe to and act within this code.”

It is based on the above contexts that we should make it our collective obligation to interact constructively on all issues that affect us but most important on how to improve the delivery of education for our people, because if we succeed in doing that poverty, preventable diseases, lawlessness and all social ills will be a thing of the past.

Economic emancipation, growth and development can only be realized if our commitment to education can be measured as it happened in today’s meeting.

In conclusion let me once more extend our profound appreciation to all who made it possible that we are able to gather as we deed today, the executive Mayor of Emalahleni, Premier, Minister our stakeholders the list goes on and on. Thank you very much for your Patriotic commitment, your benevolence does not go unnoticed.

Thank You.