

Address by Honourable Premier TSP Makwetla at the joint launch of the Provincial House of Traditional Leaders and the Integrated 2010 World Cup Offices, Nelspruit

10 September 2008

Programme Director
MEC for Local Government and Housing, MEC Mashego-Dlamini, and Members of the Executive Council
Executive Mayor of Mbombela Municipality, Councillor L Chiwayo, and Executive Mayors and Councillors present here today
Honourable Members of Provincial Legislature (MPLs)
The Director-General, Mr Khaya Ngema and Senior Government Officials
Our distinguished guests
Members of the media
Ladies and gentlemen

It gives me great pleasure to be part of this important occasion which marks the official launch of offices that the Provincial Government has made available for use by the provincial House of Traditional Leaders (HTLs) and the Integrated 2010 World Cup Programme. The official opening of these offices represents an expression of our continued commitment to supporting the work of the institution of traditional leadership in the province so that it plays its rightful and meaningful role in development and service delivery improvement.

An integrated 2010 Office underscores our resolve to strengthen an institutional platform and space for effective coordination in the implementation of the 2010 World Cup Programme in Mpumalanga. As a province, we are committed to delivering an exciting world cup experience to the ordinary people of the province, the country and the world.

Programme Director, the effective implementation of government programmes in communities within the jurisdiction of traditional leadership depends on collaborative partnerships with the institution of traditional leadership. For us, it is crucial that within our democratic system of local government, we continue to enhance the participation of traditional leadership institutions in development planning, local economic development and programme implementation to advance service delivery and development to benefit the poor people in the Province. If we are to successfully tackle poverty challenges, we need functional collaboration between government and the institutions of traditional leadership.

Over the years, we have been blessed as a province to work with the pedigree of traditional leadership cadre whose support for the programmes of government has enabled us to advance development and expand service delivery in many areas under the jurisdiction of traditional leadership. It is appropriate to commend the leadership of Houses of Traditional Leaders at both provincial and district levels for the contribution they are continuing to make towards development and accelerated service delivery.

The Provincial Government's continued commitment to supporting the institution of traditional leadership is unwavering. Part of the support we are providing is ensuring that the institution of traditional leadership in the Province has the necessary infrastructure and capacity to discharge its responsibilities. Today's official launch and opening of the offices of the Provincial House of Traditional Leaders bears testimony to government's support towards enabling the House to have the necessary infrastructure required to pursue the mandate and programmes of the House.

Programme Director, it is also encouraging that the District Houses of Traditional Leaders are functioning well. The appointment of personnel to support District Houses has almost been concluded. At local level, we believe that District Houses will enhance the quality of engagement and participation by citizens in matters of development and service delivery.

As part of the implementation of the Mpumalanga Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Act, 2005, the Department of Local Government has concluded the elections for the Traditional Councils, barring those traditional councils where outstanding issues need to be resolved first before elections take place. In a matter of weeks, the Department in partnership with the Local Government Sector Education and Training Authority (LGSETA) will launch the capacity building programme for traditional leaders and elected traditional councillors.

The programme will focus on local governance issues such as integrated development planning, local economic development, etc. I wish to take this opportunity to thank most sincerely the cooperation and support by all

traditional leaders who have made the establishment of fully fledged traditional councils possible in their areas of jurisdiction.

Programme Director, as I highlighted in the Office of the Premier's Policy and Budget Speech, the successful co-ordination of the 2010 Fifa World Cup preparations in collaboration with the host city, Mbombela, continues to be one of the key priorities for the 2008/09 financial year. Progress registered in infrastructure projects, including stadium construction indicate that, on the whole, we are on track despite challenges we are continuously addressing as they emerge.

Critically, we must work hard to ensure that we meet our targets in all the preparation work that we are currently engaged in. It is important that our sector plans are implemented to address issues related to transport infrastructure, stadium construction, tourism and hospitality, emergency services, safety and security as well as legacy projects.

As a province, we should strive to promote unity, socio-economic interaction and good relations among the people of the continent. On the back of successfully hosting the Premier's International Football Cup and the Council of Southern Africa Football Associations (Cosafa) Senior Challenge this year, it is crucial that we continue to work collaboratively with all soccer bodies in the implementation of mass participation in World Cup related events to ensure that the hosting of the 2010 World Cup on the African soil is a resounding success. We should sustain the momentum created by these events to broaden awareness and participation by as many people on the continent as possible.

Programme Director, an integrated 2010 office officially being launched today has been established to serve as a central point of coordination for all 2010 World Cup Programme activities, and to strengthen co-ordination among the implementing institutions. This office is intended to foster alignment and synergy in the work done by Mbombela Municipality, the Office of the Premier and the Department of Culture, Sports and Recreation and Fifa Local Organising Committee representatives.

The 2010 Integrated Office has to undertake the monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the 24 Fifa Guarantees which are central to the preparations for the 2010 World Cup. This integrated work hub will further accommodate under one roof some of the key members of the Fifa Local Organising Committee (LOC), thus contributing to greater synergy in the deployment of efforts and resources for build-up events and the staging of the 2010 event itself. 2010 is about playing soccer and the recent performance of Bafana Bafana is a matter of national importance, for the province as well.

I would like to conclude by stating that, we should not look at the 2010 World Cup as an ephemeral event that comes and goes, but appreciate the opportunity it presents to foster continental social cohesion, nation building and economic integration on the continent. The 2010 Fifa African Legacy Program places the additional tasks of supporting the realisation of the African Renaissance objectives on the 2010 Integrated Office.

I thank you.