

## REMARKS BY PREMIER TSP MAKWETLA AT THE MEMORIAL SERVICE OF INGWENYAMA MAYITJHA III HELD ON 16 JULY 2005 AT THE KAMEELRIVIER STADIUM

Baphathi bohlelo

Abaholi bendabuko

Izingonyama namakhosi

Chairperson of the Mpumalanga House of Traditional leaders Inkosi u-Mzingeli Mthethwa,

Kgoshikgolo Mampuru waboraro,

Inkosi Patekile Holomisa from Contralesa,

and all the people gathered here today.

Programme Director, allow me a momentary shelter from tradition to address this gathering as a gathering of fellow mourners, even as tradition is unambiguous that the passing on of a King is not mourned. What befell indlunkulu nesizwe samaNdebele akwa Ndzundza and the Province of Mpumalanga is overwhelming. Simply put, we have not been here before.

If in some respects our conduct today is outside the normal boundaries, let it be appreciated that we are indeed grappling with an occurrence that is not ordinary.

Ngijame lapha phambi kompakathi nesizwe esisozini olukhulu njamele isifundazwe sase-Mpumalanga naso esishaceke kakhulu ngo-kukhothama kwesilo samabandla.

Kubobonke abakwa Ndzundza, INdlovukazi, kanye naMakhosikazi, kubantwana bakwa Mgwezane nabazukulu kanye neminye imindeni, angikaze ngicabange ukuthi umzuzu onjengalona uyokufika lapho ngidabuka ngokuKhothama komfowethu, uzakwethu, futhi umngane wethu sonke ebesimhlonipha njengoba naye ebesihlonipha.

Ndlovukazi naMakhosikazi, ngiyazi ukuthi esikhathini esiningi ebantwini bendawo yinina enibizwa ukuba niyoduduza, nithobe oMama noBaba, abakhwenyana nomakoti, amadodana namadodakazi abashiywe yizithandwa zabo mphakathi wakwa ku-Ndzundza.

Nibanikeze amandla. Manje, thina ngobuntu nangenhlonipho, sihlangene lapha ukuzonika nina lawo mandla.

Programme Director, fellow mourners, the enormity of the loss occasioned by the untimely death of His Majesty King Mayitjha III lies in the fact that more than any other ethnic group the vicious scars of colonial conquest were even more pronounced in the conditions of his people, the proud descendants of Musi and Nyabela.

With the liberation of this country, the late King Mayitjha understood very well the time and place his reign occupied in the history of his people. He displayed a keen understanding that a golden opportunity had arisen to tackle in earnest the reconstruction and development of his ancestors' followers.

He understood his duties with zeal and the urgency which tempts the mind to think that he was a man who knew that he was fighting against time.

In his many illustrious initiatives to reconstruct the identity of AmaNdebele less than a year ago, he invited us to an elaborate function to unveil tombstones of old graves of the royal family whose record and identity was a challenge to track and preserve, partly because in the days of old cattle-kraals were used as cemeteries.

Ingwenyama Mayitjha wesithathu, **Mabhoko sindeni umhlab'unethuli, silembe sakophikwa, ikomo e raga abelusi, undlela ezimazombe njengobunyonyo**, was a colourful leader and a man of his people.

**UMgwezane** , was respected far beyond the many realms over which he reigned. The simple dignity of his life, his manly virtues, his sense of duty – both as a ruler and as a servant of the vast communities for which he bore responsibility - his gay charm and happy nature, his example as a husband and a father in his own family circle, his courage - all these were aspects of his character which won the glint of admiration from many people who came to know him.

For the 12 years UMkalanga was King, he was always probing for opportunities to better the lives of his subjects. In this quest he appreciated the wisdom to stay close to government at all times, and to cultivate partnerships.

His positive attitude towards government while remaining a steward of the aspirations of traditional leaders, easily distinguished him as one of the central voices of his constituency.

The successes we have scored over the past eleven years happened because it was our conviction that traditional leaders have a critical role to play in our long journey to overcome rural oppression, the urban-rural dichotomy of South Africa. We have gone a long way in creating that better life, but many challenges remain. We need to stay tenaciously with the problem of high unemployment, continuing job losses, low savings and low levels of investment. The challenge of poverty and deep inequalities based on class, race, gender and region are some of the challenges that we must tackle to honour the memory of King Mayithja III.

**Our vision has always been one of a prosperous, equitable, stable and democratic society. In the economy, our vision has been one of decent work and living standards for all, in the context of qualitatively improved equity in ownership, management skills and access to opportunities.**

That is the monument we must build for Ingwenyama u-Mayitjha wesithathu.

We must continue to recognize the power of his spirit, that we do not diminish it with time, or dilute it with our fear of loss. Let us celebrate the richness of his life now and into the future.

To isizwe SamaNdebele, continue to grow from strength to strength and enrich the bigger family that is Mpumalanga. Remember, “when conflict is handled correctly, we grow closer to each other” – Rick Warren. It is timeless wisdom to bear the burden of being considerate of the doubts and fears of others.

To the royal family and friends, may the memories of precious past times help to ease the pain and wipe away your tears. For his part, may the soul of Ingwenyama u-Mayitjha III rest in peace.

**I thank you.**