

**ACCEPTANCE SPEECH BY HON. PREMIER RM MTSHWENI ON THE
OCCASION OF ACCEPTING NOMINATION AS PREMIER OF
MPUMALANGA PROVINCE**

DATE: 22 MAY 2019

VENUE: CHAMBER, LEGISLATURE

Madam Speaker,

Deputy Speaker

Esteemed Members of the legislature

**Executive Mayors, Speakers, Chief Whips and all Councillors in our
midst;**

**Judge President of the Mpumalanga Division of the High Court,
Judge Francis Legodi;**

The Acting DG Mathew Mohlasedi and senior government officials;

Amakhosi, Mahoshi;

**The Acting Chairperson of the African National Congress in
Mpumalanga, Cde Mandla Ndlovu;**

The leadership of our Alliance Partners;

Invited Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

1. It is with great humility and a great sense of duty that I accept the privilege and the great responsibility of being elected as the Premier of this beautiful Province.
2. Let me start by extending my heart felt gratitude to my political home, the African National Congress for its confidence in my ability to lead the Mpumalanga Provincial Government.
3. I commit myself to work tirelessly to justify the confidence you have shown in me to lead this Province. I will be doing this, not only for myself but to give credence to the trust that all the women in Mpumalanga have in me, as they look up to me to aptly represent them.
4. To the people of this great Province, I commit myself to be your servant, to serve you with honesty, dignity, diligence and integrity.
5. Madam Speaker, None of us is a paragon of virtue, and as such, if I commit mistakes, it will not be due to my gender as a woman, but in the course of my duty, and due to the fact that I am not infallible to an error, as a human being.
6. Leadership, by its very definition, carries great responsibility that I commit myself to bearing.
7. I joined the African National Congress as a teenager because I believed and still believe in its core values. The ANC guides my work and serves as my moral compass. I am who I am because of the values of the ANC.

8. Madam Speaker, It is my strong belief that the Government of this Province has a duty and responsibility to create a dignified quality of life for our people. My duty as the Premier, is to ensure that this responsibility remains the cornerstone of this 6th Administration.
9. With this being said, I cannot be and perform my duties as the Premier without you the people of Mpumalanga. Without you, this Province is incomplete, without one single person, one single community, one single group, without our regions, alliance partners and districts, we cease to be the embodiment of unity and the Province of the rising sun.
10. We are a people with a rich history. Our unity in our diversity and our unity in purpose, makes us unique.
11. This unity is underpinned by the ethos of the ANC, a party that champions the aspirations of the working class, the poor and the marginalized irrespective of the colour of the skin.
12. It is because of the ethos of the ANC that our people have once more and for the sixth consecutive general elections, overwhelmingly voted for the ANC to lead this Province. Our people voted for this glorious movement because they have witnessed our transition from being a liberation Movement to being a people centred government. Our people know that it is the ANC only that will continue to work hard to ensure a ***better life for all.***
13. Madam Speaker, Our people have seen and experienced what is like to move from a position of despair and hopelessness that prevailed before the 1994 democratic dispensation, to live in a

country where their human dignity, self-worth and human liberties are guaranteed by a world renowned Constitution.

14. Therefore, Our people know that whenever they have mandated the ANC the privilege to govern their land, we have governed for the benefit of all the people of this Province. And we don't take for granted this privilege they provided us.
15. As a result of trusting the ANC with their vote, our people have seen the provision of water, electricity, houses, free quality education, free health care and social security progressively.
16. By voting for the ANC, our people have unequivocally mandated the ANC to continue what it started in 1994 to provide them with these services for the next coming five years. Therefore all of us should accept that the people have spoken and ***we have heard them.***
17. Our people know and appreciate that these are their inalienable rights. The rights their founding fathers ***oTata Mandela*** and their mothers, ***oMama Albertina Sisulu*** fought for.
18. As a majority party, Madam Speaker, coming out of these extremely tiring and demanding but free and fair elections we, as the ANC, have travelled the length and breadth of this province. ***We have listened*** to our people, those who voted for us and those who have not voted for us. We know what their concerns are and we commit ourselves to addressing them.
19. The implementation of fundamental measures to confront the triple challenges of poverty, unemployment and inequality will be a top priority of the new and capable Executive that I will establish in the

coming week. We are poised to double our efforts for the realization of a better life for all.

20. This administration will never rest as long as our people remain in poverty, without land, without jobs and without tangible prospects of a better life.
21. We are confident that we can build on the foundation of what we have already achieved and realize our goals by drawing on the energies of our people, growing an inclusive economy, building capabilities, enhancing the capacity of our government and promoting partnerships with the private sector.
22. Madam Speaker, Our people are demanding that we should increase the pace of service delivery, create more job opportunities through partnerships with the private sector and grow the economy. Their demands are not unreasonable and we will work even harder to meet them.
23. For us to be able to accelerate progress, deepen democracy and build a more inclusive society we must convert our political gains into economic wellbeing for all.
24. To eliminate poverty and reduce inequality, our economy must grow faster and benefit not just a few but all those who live in this province.
25. It is only by enhancing our engagements with our people in the decisions that matter to their lives, in the true spirit of our participatory democracy, that we as a province will meet the challenges that we are facing.

26. I commit myself to lead by example. Wherever I find an opportunity denied, aspirations unfulfilled, potential unrealized; and whenever I find injustice and unfairness, it is my duty and that of those in positions of power to act and act decisively.
27. Madam Speaker, our peoples cries against corruption has not fallen on deaf ears. Equally we are concerned of the fact that corruption robs our people of their future. When the limited public funds, designed to improve the lives of our people, are channeled illegally out of the system and eventually land in the pockets of unscrupulous individuals, our people become poorer.
28. As such corruption will be declared our number one public enemy. I will act decisively against it whenever it rears its ugly head as part of my commitment to build a clean government based on integrity. I will do everything humanly possible to squeeze the space against those with ill-gotten plans to enrich themselves at the expense of our people.
29. We will never forget that the power of government cannot supersede the power and the will of the ordinary people. We shall never pretend that we know best what our people need. We will continue to reach out to them as their servants at all times, putting them first.
30. We will renew people's trust in government and strengthen our local government through public participation and citizens' forums like **Operation Vuka Sisebente** and **Ward Committees**.
31. We will make sure that ordinary citizens, especially the youth and other community representatives like civil organizations, have the

chance and the platform to fully outline the concerns that matter to them.

32. We will consolidate our gains and where changes are necessary we will boldly implement them and not shy away. If it means changing the way we look, the way we think and the way we behave, so be it.
33. This province Madam Speaker, faces huge challenges that cannot be put in individual boxes due to their complexity. However we are resolute in our determination to solve them, lest history judge us harshly, should we fail to tackle them.
34. To the Honourable members representing the opposition parties, we debated issues fiercely during the election campaigns. That is now behind us. Our ideological differences must not be detrimental to the improvement of the lives of our people. Let us work together for their sake.
35. Our debates in this chamber from now on must not be characterized by cruelty, demeaning and malicious assertions against one another. Our arguments must be respectful, dignified and constructive, as dictated to by the Oath of office we have signed.
36. You have the right to be here as elected by your constituencies who want to see progress in the Province of the rising sun.
37. To the people of Mpumalanga, I cannot over-emphasize the importance of your support for me and for this government. Your prayers and citizen activism will carry us through. Now that you have elected us, we look forward to your active participation in all our activities.

38. Your constructive criticism is welcome. We urge you to use all government forums for participation including established communication platforms, such as social media to engage us.
39. Violent protests and the destruction of public property to draw our attention will be self defeating and will set us backward.
40. Once again, we urge you to utilize all available and established communication platforms to raise your concerns and we will certainly pay attention to what you wish to bring forth.
41. As this 6th Administration, we will continue to build schools, early childhood development centers, hospitals, clinics, roads and houses. We shall also address the outstanding backlogs on the provision of water, electricity and sanitation networks.
42. Our main focus during the next five years will be jobs, jobs and more jobs. We will invite and attract investments, support small businesses and cooperatives.
43. To the Members of the fifth democratically elected Legislature, we thank you and salute you for the sterling oversight role that you have played for the past five years. To the new members we say welcome, siyanamukela, welkom, and we urge you to hold us accountable and play your oversight role without fear, favour or prejudice.

I thank you.