

**CLOSING REMARKS BY THE MEC FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT,
ENVIRONMENT AND TOURISM, MR M.N MOKOENA, MPL, DURING A BOARD
MEETING OF THE MTPA BOARD AT HALLS GATEWAY, MATAFFIN,
MBOMBELA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY.**

Tuesday, 07 February 2012

- Programme Director;
- Head of Department, Dr Vusanani Dlamini;
- CEO of MGB, Mr Bheki Mlambo;
- Acting CEO of MTPA, Dr Nthabiseng Motete;
- Acting CEO of MEGA, Mr Elvis Rabohale;
- Officials of the Department and our three (3) Public Entities;

Good Afternoon!

POLITICAL INTRODUCTION BY JOHN SIKHOSANA

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Way-forward

We have deliberated over the past two (2) days on what we are supposed to carry-out as the Department, incorporating our three (3) public entities, in order to fulfil our mandate.

Programme Managers presented their plans for the forthcoming financial year, including our entities, supported by the financial resources at our disposal. However one still picks-up **a challenge of duplication** or lack of segregation of duties, despite having created these agencies to carry-out some of our mandates on our behalf.

Despite this issue having been raised in our past retreats, it has still not been corrected or clarified. This in fact contributes to what one could call 'double-dipping,' given that the Department continues to perform some functions which have been delegated or are supposed to be performed by our agencies.

Going forward HOD, I direct that this situation be corrected as a matter of urgency. What needs to be performed by our agencies must be clarified, and the Department should be left mainly with the function of providing policy directives, monitoring and evaluation.

Secondly, we **must finalise the organisational structure of the Department** by the end of the current financial year. I believe that we cannot start the new financial year without this prerequisite, which give us guidance on how we are structured for effective performance of our mandate.

Thirdly, what became clear is that the **full implementation of the Mpumalanga Liquor Licensing Act** has become a non-negotiable issue. It has been raised by the Portfolio Committee on a number of occasions, and we must ensure that the **Mpumalanga Liquor Authority is activated**, as promised, by the beginning of the 2012/2013 financial year.

I'm mindful of the financial constraints we face as a Department, but I believe that this is possible, given that we already have 'warm bodies' within the said Programme. This is a legal requirement which we have been unable to implement fully since 2007. I therefore direct that the HOD should set-up a team which will oversee this process until implementation. I expect to be updated by the HOD on this issue on a weekly basis. Once this agency is up and running, it will give us an advantage to register our financial pressure with the Provincial Treasury.

MTPA

On Tuesday last week, I addressed the fully complemented Board of the *MTPA* and raised a number of challenges which they should assist to address. These amongst others, include ensuring that the *MTPA* **continues to grow our tourism stake and ensuring bio-diversity management and conservation.**

This is against the backdrop that the tourism sector remains one of the most significant sectors in this Province, as highlighted in the proposed *Mpumalanga Economic Growth and Development Path*, the *MEGDP*. This is because the new growth path for the Province has identified this sector as being critical towards creating the much needed job opportunities, intended to contribute towards reducing the high levels of unemployment.

You will recall that we have a bigger role to play in what I call, **'the three triplets'** – **Poverty, unemployment and inequality.**

I therefore believe that the *MTPA* will ensure that the projects they've listed for the next financial year, will be carry-out in order to contribute to our government's priorities, as mandated by the ruling party, the African National Congress.

MEGA

On the same breath, *MEGA's* role is very significant towards empowering and growing our SMMEs. The interim Board of the agency and management has a critical role to play in ensuring that it is finally stable, for it to continue to perform

what it is created to perform. I hope that come the new financial year, it will be all systems go at *MEGA* – that is, the merger process would have been concluded in all respects.

MGB

The MGB continues to be our flagship agency, and we must continue to applaud its Board and management, under the leadership of CEO, Mr Bheki Mlambo, for continuing to do a sterling job in regulating our gambling and betting industry. It is a good example to be emulated by other agencies. All I can wish, is for the agency to continue to perform exceptionally well.

MLA

As indicated, the Mpumalanga Liquor Authority will be our priority in the upcoming financial year. We must make everything possible to ensure that it is realised.

Please add.....

POLITICAL CLOSURE BY JOHN SIKHOSANA

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