

WELCOME REMARKS BY THE MEC FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING, HONOURABLE CNM PADAYACHEE DURING THE PROVINCIAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT SUMMIT IN NELSPRUIT

04 September 2008

Honourable Premier, Mr TSP Makwetla
Honourable Members of the Executive Council
Mayor and representative of our local government system
Representatives of business and organized business formation
Representatives of organised labour
Representatives of community organizations
Distinguished guests
Ladies and gentlemen

It is an honour for me to welcome you all to this august event which represents our collective commitment to socio-economic development in our province.

Programme director, we have accepted the responsibility to drive the process of turning the tide on unemployment, poverty and underdevelopment as part of our commitment to the achievements of the Millennium Development Goals.

We made this undertaking because it was and still is in the interests of all of us to ensure that our country and indeed our province respond to the needs of our people.

Our meeting here today and tomorrow is therefore a giant step in our continuing efforts to ensure that we “pursue economic growth, development and redistribution so as to achieve a better life for all.”

It is my view that this Summit must communicate a message that, as Mpumalanga province, we are reasserting ourselves through taking this responsibility to be in charge of our destiny.

Programme Director, since the last Provincial Growth and Development Summit in Badplaas in February 2005, there were number of victories that as a province we are proud of but there were also challenges that we had to overcome.

We are in an ever changing environment, and given the current climate of high inflation and escalating food prices which puts severe pressure on our people, this summit affords us a timely opportunity to reassess our strategies so as to keep in touch with our developmental goals.

The targeted approaches that will be advanced in this Summit must therefore help us to deal with socio-economic challenges and pave the way for a better performing province that we shall all be proud of as the citizen of Mpumalanga.

Without saying much, let me acknowledge the presence of the Honourable Premier, Mr TSP Makwetla and welcome him to the podium to address us.