

ADDRESS BY THE MEC FOR FINANCE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM, MR SIKHUMBUZO ERIC KHOLWANE, MPL, DURING THE STRATEGIC PLANNING SESSION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM AT MBOMBELA HOLIDAY RESORT, SCHAGEN, MBOMBELA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

Wednesday, 26 July 2016

Thank you the Facilitator of the Session;

- The Head of Economic Development and Tourism, Mr Muzi Mkhize;
- Chairperson of the MTPA Board, Mr Thulani Nzima;
- CEOs of our Public Entities;
- Senior Management and officials of the Department and Public Entities;
- Ladies and gentlemen;

San'bonani/ Good Morning

1. We meet here this morning, on the last week of the month dedicated to pay homage to former President, **tat'u Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela**.

2. We started the month by hosting what I believe, was the successful two-day **International Co-operatives Day**, which attracted close to a thousand members of co-operatives from across the country.
3. We were also honoured to **host two (2) Ministers from SADC countries**, namely, Lesotho and Zimbabwe.
4. We went further to strengthen our support to small businesses, through the **empowerment of informal tyre servicing traders** in our townships and rural communities.
5. Ten (10) such businesses received **tyre servicing equipment to the total value of R1, 5 million**.
6. Each of the ten (10) tyre serving centres **received equipment worth R150 000**.
7. Furthermore, we participated in the sod-turning ceremony for the construction of a strategic economic infrastructure, the **Mpumalanga International Fresh Produce Market**, which we have supported from the conception stage to-date.

8. All these events and activities are part of our deliverables, in terms of our **Annual Performance Plan**.
9. We must therefore work hard to ensure that all other planned deliverables within our respective APPs, are achieved without failure.
10. Our gathering here this morning – the second this year, is thus aimed at **taking stock of the progress we have made, coming up with urgent interventions where things appear to have slowed, and plan for the outer years** of our mandate period of the current Administration.
11. We must do this collectively, as the **DEDT family, incorporating our Public Entities**, to realise the dreams and aspirations of our people who sometimes go to bed on an empty stomach.
12. As we, our aspiration is to become **thought leaders and economic policy drivers** for our Province, in order to deal with the triple challenges of **poverty, unemployment and inequality** being endured by our communities.

13. So let us live up to that aspiration.
14. Living up to that aspiration means **doing things differently, efficiently and faster.**
15. It means putting **more effort, energy and working with zoom and zeal.**
16. It means ensuring that you complete what you had planned to do today, today, without procrastination.
17. Our people want **jobs today**, and not tomorrow.
18. They cannot wait for us to sort out our personal differences nor our bruised ego, in whatever way, to heal.

HOD and CEOs;

19. Our **departmental contributions to advance government's developmental agenda and priorities**, especially on the municipal space, remain crucial.

20. Considering the possibility of new priorities emanating from the outcomes of the forthcoming local government elections, the planning outcomes of this **Strategic Planning Session** must therefore, amongst others, be responsive and be relevant to local government circumstances.
21. In this regard, we must **up-scale our support at Regional level**, including the **support we provide to municipalities on Local Economic Development**, to ensure that municipalities remain a conducive space for investment and socio-economic advancement.
22. Accordingly, we must **influence the determination and adoption of municipal IDPs**, as well as collaborating and putting our limited financial and non-financial resources into one pot, in order to impact decisively on service delivery issues.
23. The area of **business regulation that deals with municipal by-laws** needs more attention.
24. We must strengthen our support to **ensure that all local municipalities eventually have street trading by-laws**,

given that the support function on municipal Local Economic Development has been duly transferred to our Department.

25. This Strategic Planning Session must **provide a balanced assessment of the socio-economic status quo**, and highlight how the various sectors performed over time.
26. We must also determine innovative means to leverage on opportunities and addressing challenges identified – as informed by the **Industrial Development Plan**.
27. Let us further tighten our ground breaking work concluded so far. Amongst others, the Implementation Plan of the Industrial Development Plan, the Partnership Agreements, the work of the Project Co-ordination Committee.
28. We must also ensure that a **clear and executable business case** is agreed by this session, on how we will **direct, co-ordinate and facilitate industrialisation initiatives** – in collaboration with our strategic partners, especially on funding requirements.

29. It is also critical that we must continue to find ways to improve internal systems efficiencies and the performance of the Department, as well as the Entities. This must result in ease of influencing budget increase requests.
30. The ongoing **OD Process** is valuable in this regard, but it must be expedited to limit consequences of uncertainties in order to boost staff morale and performance.
31. I have confidence that the newly appointed Head of Department will influence stability in the organisation, as well as drive effective performance of the Department and its Entities.
32. This must start with the development of **SMART Strategic and Annual Performance Plans**, coupled with continued monitoring of performance.

TAKING STOCK OF ACHIEVEMENTS

Ladies and gentlemen;

33. One of our major priorities was to **achieve a Clean Audit**. I am delighted that, for the first time, this Department have achieved a clean audit.
34. It was tough, but we have made it. **Congratulations to Team DEDT.**
35. We got inspiration from the MGB, and we must never regress in this regard.
36. As a norm, because we are never surprised when it happens, our shining Public Entity – the **MGB has once again received a Clean Audit.**
37. I know the CEO and his team are whispering, and proudly saying: “**Welcome Aboard Flight-MP-Clean Audit**”
38. As the saying goes, **your strength is determined by your weakest link**. What is therefore left for us, is to **assist MEGA and the MTPA** to board this flight.
39. We cannot be content with our achievements, when one or rather two (2) links in the chain are weak.

40. With regards to the **MLA**, we can report that the **Entity has now detached from the Department.**
41. It has its own **Executive Management Committee**; its **5-Year Strategic Plan has been approved** by the Executive Council and the Provincial Legislature.
42. It has also **submitted its first Annual Financial Statements** to the Auditor General, and we hope for an inaugural Clean Audit from them.
43. They have further **developed their own policies on Human Resources and IT, as well as Line Function Procedure Manuals**, amongst others.
44. In addition, all HR related processes regarding the **transfer of staff from the Department to the Entity** are at the final stages.
45. The **Liquor Licence Renewal Process for 2016 has been finalised**, despite challenges encountered, due to the use of the Manual System since the electronic System is non-functional.

46. We are also looking forward **towards legislative and regulatory amendments of the Liquor Laws**, as well as improved Stakeholders relations with the affected Departments, Local Authorities, Suppliers, Licensees and their Associations.
47. Regarding the MTPA, we have **appointed a new Board for the Entity**. All our Entities, including the MLA, now have functional Boards which will guide their work.

Ladies and gentlemen;

48. In conclusion, as you are aware, next week we will go back to the polls yet again, to **vote for the political party** that will continue to represent the interests and wishes of our people, including yourselves.
49. I urge all of you, to exercise your democratic right which was earned through the blood of others.
50. We owe it to all those who sacrificed their lives, for us to enjoy this right, hence it is significant that we honour them through our mark at the polls.

51. The elections effectively start on **Monday, the first of August**, to cater for those who have **applied for Special Votes**.

52. I hope that the majority of you, if not all, have applied to cast a **Special Vote on either the first or second of August**.

53. Go out and Vote correctly from the 1st until the 3rd August.

54. If we do not meet before the elections, I wish you Happy Polling as you go to assist to entrench our hard earned democracy.

55. HOD, CEOs and your teams, I wish you fruitful discussions, and officially open this Strategic Planning Session.

Together We Move Mpumalanga Forward by striving for ***“An inclusive globally competitive economy!”***

Ngiyabonga/ I thank you!