

SPEECH BY THE MEC FOR FINANCE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM, MR SIKHUMBUZO KHOLWANE, MPL, DURING THE LAUNCH OF THE MBOMBELA BRANCH OF THE BLACK MANAGEMENT FORUM AT CASAMBO EXCLUSIVE LODGE, MBOMBELA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

Programme Directors

Chairperson, Mr E Maema and the Branch Executive of the Mbombela BMF

CEO of Mpumalanga Gambling Board, Mr Bheki Mlambo

Regional Manager of SABC, Mr Quinton Lenyai

Prof Moses Mbewe from the University of Mpumalanga

Esteemed guests

Ladies and gentlemen

Members of the Media

Good evening

1. It is an honour for me to address this launch of the Mbombela Branch of the Black Management Forum this evening.

2. This launch takes place on the same day that the African National Congress launched its election manifesto for the upcoming local government elections.
3. I will however refrain from making any assumptions save to say the vision of the Black Management Forum reflects the central task of *Ukhongolose* which is to harness skills development and drive employment equity plan as part of the programme to radically transform the society.
4. Over the past five years, the Provincial Government and all stakeholders have worked very hard to strengthen the system of local government.
5. We have begun a process to **Go Back to Basics** of service delivery and financial accounting at the local government sphere.
6. We are confident that the programme that this Government has put in place, under the auspices of Operation *Vuka sisebente*, will restore power to the people, and ensure that every household has access to electricity, water, sanitation and other relevant amenities.

7. To this end, we call on all professionals to join us in making local government work better for all.
8. We appeal to all professionals who were unable to register during the recent voter registration weekends to approach their nearest IEC offices and register or update their details to be eligible to vote on the 3rd of August 2016.
9. It is your Constitutional Right to Vote.
10. Local Government is in your hands.

Economy

11. Programme Director, the theme for this launch – ***advancing the black professionals within the tough economic climate*** – signify the relevance of the branch to the national and provincial discourse.
12. It communicates a clear message that the corps of professionals in the Province want to work together with the Government to find a solution to the current economic situation.

13. The global economy is growing at a very slow pace.
14. The outlook remains uneven, heavily influenced by the slowing Chinese economy.
15. Our economic growth expectation as a country and consequently that of Mpumalanga for 2016 has been reduced due to weak global aggregate demand, falling commodity prices and increasing financial market volatility.
16. Drought and the depreciation of the rand are exerting upward pressure on inflation and impacting negatively on economic growth.
17. Given this constrained economic climate, the Government had no choice but to introduce far-reaching measures to contain public expenditure in the medium term period.
18. As a result the public spending over the 2016 Medium Term Expenditure Framework period will remain within the level set in the 2014 Budget.

19. The current challenges, Programme Director, favour those who took proactive steps by anticipating the effects of the weak economic environment and those who listened to earlier warnings on fiscal consolidation.
20. We are not okay, but we are not worse-off compared to other Provinces.

NDP and Mpumalanga Vision 2030

21. The National Development Plan sets a vision and programme to build a society that resonates with the expectation of modern democratic citizens.
22. The plan has been customized to the provincial context through the Mpumalanga Vision 2030 Strategic Implementation Framework, which itself narrates our pragmatic course towards an inclusive citizenry.
23. The Mpumalanga Vision 2030 is therefore a provincial expression of the key priorities, objectives and targets enumerated in the National Development Plan.

24. The inclusive nature of the two policy documents emphasizes the importance of collaboration with all sectors of society in ensuring a better life for all South Africans.
25. To this end, our agenda for radical transformation will remain focused on accelerating growth, creating work opportunities and building a more equal society.
26. Importantly, we will continue to focus on initiatives that will expand economic participation and empowerment; and those which will result in significant value-add while ensuring that youth remain the key beneficiaries of our developmental programmes.

NDP ON LEADERSHIP

27. The Plan emphasises the need for strong leadership in government, business and labour to solve our developmental challenges.
28. I am pleased that the founding proposal of the Black Management Forum conforms with this instructive mandate

of the NDP as it relates to the development of talent and leadership that advance the national development goals.

29. It will be a big mistake to think that the implementation of our plans will yield the desired results without effective managers and transformational leaders in both the private and public sectors.
30. Sometimes, the leadership of our institutions are led to expect only positive qualities from those in management positions.
31. We are led to believe that those in management positions are immune from making mistakes, perhaps because that is how they project themselves in the course of service delivery.
32. We try to practice the pedagogy of moral asepsis.
33. The reality is that the person who does something must necessarily make mistakes. What's important is to recognize those mistakes, to be aware of them, to correct them and then leave an imprint in the managers' self-education.

34. Pedagogy demands this optimistic approach in the treatment of managers during this complex process of learning.
35. Program Director this reminds me of one of the great revolutionaries, Che Guevara who once said, and I quote:

“We should have undertaken the task of learning from our work and from our mistakes.

We could not help making mistakes because we were doing something new to us, under difficult conditions; making mistakes it's not a sin, the sin is to repeat those mistakes; the sin is in hiding them instead of analyzing them.

We must fight our mistakes, hammer on them, analyse the and avoid repeating them”

Close Quote

36. When a manager knows that his or her mistakes are not admissible he or she tries to hide them, cover up, and in some instances inexcusably absolve themselves by transferring the blame to someone else.

37. This false behaviour is the worst kind of hypocrisy that we should try to eradicate, at all costs, from our transformational environment.
38. The open, fearless analysis and the creation of the aspiration to improve in the performance are pedagogically transcendental element of our learning curve.
39. To put in short, Che Guavara had this to say
- " We should work almost obsessively for our internal improvement. Everyday, we should honestly analyse what we have done, then correct our mistakes and restart the same procedure the following day. It should be a constant endeavour, one where analysis and self-analysis prevail. Self-criticism as an activity towards self-improvement and collective improvement must set in as we all get used to bring to light our flaws, our mistakes and to discuss them in order to correct them"***
40. In my humble opinion this is the posture that we need in men and women in both the private and the public sector.

STRATEGIC PARTHERSHIPS AND MANAGEMENT

41. As a Provincial Government we believe that strategic partnerships will assist us to Move Mpumalanga Forward.
42. Over the past few years, the Government has entered into partnerships with the private sector in the areas of skills development to empower our people.
43. We are grateful to the private sector for joining us in the quest to develop a good mix of skills and competencies that are required in our priority economic sectors.
44. However, technical skills alone cannot guarantee us the best service delivery records.
45. We also need a high caliber of professionals at the senior and executive levels who are committed to upholding high performance standards and integrity during this tough economic period.
46. We need seasoned professionals who can blend their technical competences with strategic management

capabilities to ensure inculcate a result-driven and accountable service delivery posture in both public and private sector.

47. The Provincial Government stands ready to support or work with institutions that are willing to develop key industrial competencies as outlined in our Provincial Human Resource Development Strategy.
48. It is for this reason that we pledge our support to the Black Management Forum in the Province.
49. We are confident that this branch will stimulate the intellectual capacity of local professionals and managers, and contribute to transformation of our workplace, and the entire society.

CONCLUSION

50. As I conclude, Programme Director, let me reiterate the challenge that Dr. Nelson Mandela left to this great organisation in 2002 when he said and I quote:

“...as an important corps of leadership in society, you must assertively work for black advancement as a measure of overcoming historical inequalities but clearly in a manner that advances the building of a united and non-racial society” Close Quote.

51. I Thank You.