

REMARKS BY THE MEC FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, ENVIRONMENT AND TOURISM, MRS YN PHOSA, MPL ON THE OCCASION OF THE BRICS MPUMALANGA PROVINCIAL ROADSHOW AT THE EHLANZENI DISASTER MANAGEMENT CENTRE IN NELSPRUIT, EHLANZENI DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY.

Monday, 18 March 2013

Programme Director, Mr Andries Gamede, MEC for Human Settlements;

Public Enterprises Minister, Mr Malusi Gigaba;

The Executive Mayor of the Ehlanzeni District Municipality, Councillor Letta Shongwe;

MECs present;

Members of the diplomatic corps;

Councillors in our midst;

The business community;

Distinguished guests;

Members of the media;

Ladies and gentlemen;

**Good Morning!**

We meet just ten days after we celebrated the International Women's Day – a day dedicated to recognise and acknowledge women's active participation and contribution in ensuring peace, security and social progress throughout the world. On Thursday, 21 March, we will also celebrate yet another day earmarked to entrench equal human rights amongst both male and female species.

However, it is unfortunate that the women folk still do not enjoy full equal human rights. They continue to be victims of violence, with rape and domestic violence listed as significant causes of disability and death among women of reproductive age worldwide.

According to the United Nations, women the world over still experience challenges of being treated as equal to their male counterparts.

They still do not have equal rights as men; the majority of the world's 1.3 billion absolute poor people are women; and on average, women receive between 30 and 40 per cent less pay than men earn for the same work.

However on the other hand, women continue to make significant strides around the world. As South Africa, we have recognised women's extreme potential by nominating our former Minister of Home Affairs, Dr Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, as the first woman to head the African Union. Africa has concurred with us and she has finally ascended to the position of Chairperson of the African Union. This further strengthens our argument that women are king-makers in world peace and stability. Dr Dlamini-Zuma continues to do a sterling job and representing the women of South Africa and Africa by steering the African agenda.

As we celebrate Human Rights Day this week, let us remember all those women and children who have died and continues to be victims of rape and abuse.

Programme Director, Ladies and gentlemen;

As I indicated earlier, the theme for the 2013 International Women's Day is ***"A promise is a promise: Time for action to end violence against Women."*** I am happy that this theme ties very nicely with what *BRICS* intends to do. You will recall that the *BRICS* mechanism, amongst others, aims to promote **peace, security, development and co-operation**. It further aims to contribute significantly to the **development of humanity and establishing a more equitable and fair world**.

As enshrined by the Bill of Rights in chapter 2 of our country's progressive Constitution, let us collectively uphold the rights of all people including the right to life, human dignity and equality. Women are entitled to such human rights without prejudice. We should not fear anything in our own surroundings.

**Working together, we can do more** to protect Women and Children from violence, abuse and rape in our quest to build a caring and safe nation for all.

## 1. Purpose of the Road-show

Ladies and gentlemen;

As you are all aware, South Africa will host the fifth *BRICS* Summit this month, from 26 to 27, in Durban, and this road-show is thus intended to raise public awareness around the importance of South Africa's membership of the *BRICS* and the benefits thereof. *BRICS* is an acronym for **Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa** – which is a grouping of the world's five (5) leading emerging economies. South Africa only joined the bloc of what used to be *BRIC* in 2010, resulting in *BRICS*.

Coincidentally and interestingly, the acronym *BRICS* also refers to building blocks of any structure – the bricks we use to build houses, clinics, hospitals and so forth. We can with certainty, say that the objective of this organisation is to build and strengthen the economies of the member countries.

During such summits, talks are around political and entrepreneurial co-ordination, in which member countries have identified several business opportunities, economic complementarities and areas of cooperation in order to grow the economies of member countries.

Today's gathering thus provides a platform to inform the people of Mpumalanga about the significance of South Africa's membership of the *BRICS* bloc, and how this membership will benefit South Africa and its people.

This *BRICS* road-show therefore confirms the ruling ANC-led government's commitment to ensure that citizens participate in planning for a better tomorrow. Through collaborating with the four (4) *BRICS* member countries, South Africa will benefit significantly in relation to economic and investment opportunities.

On behalf of the Premier of Mpumalanga, the Executive Council and our people, we would like to express our outmost gratitude to President Jacob Zuma, for his sterling leadership, through which South Africa gained membership to *BRIC* thus turning it to *BRICS* – a symbol of hope that

the livelihood of our people will improve when South Africa benefits from associating with these four (4) of the world's leading emerging economies.

As BRICS focuses on rectifying the imbalance in the global economy and institutions of governance, we are optimistic that this association will enable us to deal with the triple challenges of **unemployment, poverty and inequality**, which continues to bedevil our emerging economy.

Ladies and gentlemen;

As we march towards 2020 – the end of the **African Women's Decade** declared by the African Union in Nairobi, Kenya in October 2010, I employ on all of us to work towards ensuring the realisation of the objectives of this campaign – mainly to ensure equality and empowerment of African women.

**BRICS** is all about **peace, security, co-operation and development of humanity and establishing a more equitable and fair world** – which includes the women folk.

As Mpumalanga, we could not miss such a rare platform to showcase business opportunities we offer in the province, whilst at the same time, also sensitizing the public about this significant and strategic Summit taking place on the African soil, most importantly, in our country.

You are therefore hereby invited to participate and make meaningful contributions in this road-show, in support of the forthcoming Summit that will take place in Durban next week.

I also wish to take this opportunity, to wish you all, a **Happy Human Rights Day** on Thursday.

## 2. Introduction of the Minister of Public Enterprise, Mr MKN Gigaba

Programme Director; ladies and gentlemen;

I now have the honour to introduce a seasoned cadre who grew within the ranks of the African National Congress Youth League. Born at Eshowe in KwaZulu-Natal, he became active in various students and youth organisations, such as Congress of South African Students (COSAS), the South African Youth Congress (SAYCO), the South African Student Congress (SASCO) and Young Christian Students (YCS) during the period 1985 to 1993.

He joined the African National Congress, the South African Communist Party (SACP) and the ANC Youth League in 1990, and was one of the founding members of the Education Students Society at the erstwhile University of Durban-Westville (UDW), which is today known as the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN). In 1993, he became the Chairperson of SASCO at the same university.

In 1996, he was elected as the President of the ANC Youth League, and became the only President in the history of the ANCYL to be elected three consecutive terms in office (1996, 1998 and 2001).

In 2004 he was re-elected to Parliament and subsequently appointed the Deputy Minister of Home Affairs until October 2010.

Amongst others, he is the Patron of the Oasis for Hope Hospice in Daveyton, Ekurhuleni, and the Patron of the Tholulwazi Organisation of Youth which is a Youth Leadership and Life-Skills Programme.

In June 2002, he was awarded the Jose' Antonio Echeverrias Medal – the highest medal awarded to students and youth leaders by the Cuban National University Students Federation.

The second born child of Reverend Jabulani and Nomthandazo Gigaba, he is currently a member of the National Executive Committee of the ANC and a member the ANC NEC Subcommittee on Economic Transformation.

He holds a Bachelor of Pedagogics in Education and a Master of Arts Degree in Social Policy, both from UDW.

He is the current Minister of Public Enterprises – the portfolio he has occupied since November 2010.

Ladies and gentlemen, I present to you, the Honourable Minister, Mr Malusi Knowledge Nkanyezi Gigaba.

Over to you Minister.

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