

KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY MEC MXOLISI SOKATHSA ON THE OCASSION OF THE LAUNCH OF THE RENOVATED MÔREWAG HOSTEL AND THE LEARNERS' GRADUATION CEREMONY

13 September 2018

Programme Director

Executive and Local Mayors

Head of the Departments, CEO's, Board members of the various institutions

Distinguished guests

Members of the community and the media

Ndiyanibulisa nonke!

Molweni, Dumelang, Goeie môre, Good morning!

INTRODUCTION

This year we are commemorating the centenary of the life of Tata Nelson Mandela and Ma Albertina Sisulu, both fearless leaders who championed our democracy and human rights. They fought with other stalwarts to extricate ourselves from a system that insulted our common humanity by dividing us from one another on the basis of race and setting us against each other as oppressed and oppressor. For many of our leaders and fallen heroes Apartheid was painful and left them with bitter memories.

Ma Albertina Sisulu once stated and I quote: " ... *Although politics has given me a rough life, there is absolutely nothing I regret about what I have done and what has happened to me and my family throughout all these years. Instead, I have been strengthened and feel more of a woman than I would otherwise have felt if my life was different,*" Close quote.

Mr. Hendrik Verwoerd also attributed the title of 'Architect of apartheid,' was also in charge of African education, which he believed should be adapted to the economic life of Africans in South Africa. In reality this limited the access of Black people to the benefits of higher education, good jobs and economic advancement. It was here that he made his infamous statement regarding the limitation of the Black academic curriculum to basic literacy and numeracy because Africans were meant to be and I quote, 'hewers of wood and drawers of water' close quote. In denying us the right to quality education the Apartheid State generated the violent political conflict in the course of which human rights were violated.

Graduates, you need to honour the youth of June 16, 1976 who fought the Bantu Educational system which was designed to 'train and fit' Africans for their role in the newly (1948) evolving apartheid society. Through bloodshed and sacrifice made by the likes of the late Hector Pieterse and Hastings Ndlovu, you were afforded the freedom, democracy and quality education. In support of the Freedom Charter of the African National Congress as adopted at the Congress of the People, in Kliptown, on 26 June 1955 state that The Doors of Learning and Culture Shall be Opened in particular and I quote "technical training shall be opened to all by means of state allowances," close quote.

The late Nelson Mandela once said, *"No country can really develop unless its citizens are educated."* and *"Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world."* Unlike the apartheid system, the ANC-led government invests the historically disadvantaged youth as we believe to have the ability to transform the economy, strive to create jobs and rule out poverty and the high rate of unemployment especially amongst youth, hence the theme: **"The year of renewal, unity and jobs."** We are determined to lead the struggle for a united, non-racial, non-sexist, democratic, and prosperous society that is free from economic oppression.

Ladies and gentlemen, on the 1 May 2017, this progressive government changed the future for a total of 41 learners from and around Prieska when they commenced with induction. On 2 May 2017 the learners commenced with their formal classes towards the Learnership qualification in Civil and Building Construction, Level Three. The theoretical and practical training on site was over a period of 12 months. The

learners were expected to spend 2 (two) weeks completing practical work and the next 2 (two) weeks theoretical training at Tswelelopele Skills Centre. As part of the learners' practical experience under supervision of an appointed contactor by Services SETA, to transfer the skills on site, they conducted renovations to the Môrewag Hostel.

Although 41 learners enrolled to be trained in Building Construction Level 3 for a period of 12 months, only 30 are graduating today. Perseverance makes the difference between failure and success. Daar is 'n Afrikaanse gesegde en ek haal aan: "*Volharding bring sukses.*" Those who did not complete the full programme will receive a Statement of Result (SOR). At the end of April 2018 a total of 30 learners successfully completed the learnership.

- Twelve (12) of the graduates are women.
- Twenty six (26) are youth

All graduates here today completed the Building in Construction Level 3 Programme and will exit into an Artisan and Construction Apprenticeship in various trades. Behind the Tswelelopele Training Centre a Trade Test Centre are being constructed which will serve as an additional facility to provide accredited training. A General Agreement was been signed on funding for the construction of the Trade Test Centre and the refurbishment of Môrewag Hostel. Various learners will be able to enroll in Building Construction Level 3 and the NCRTVET College will be the training provider for a period of 3 years.

THE JOINT VENTURE PARTNERSHIP

Programme Director, I am of the view, if we do not become radical in our approach, such as the formation of joint venture partnerships to tackle the current state of inequality, and concretely deal with past injustices with the necessary firmness and determination, we will be postponing the inevitable social friction that would pull us backward instead of launching us, as a people - into a prosperous, and shared future. Allow me to acknowledge the different stakeholders who made today possible:

- Services Sector Education and Training Authority (SETA) as the funder of the programme
- Northern Cape Rural Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) College as the trainer accredited by Construction Education and the Training Authority (CETA)
- Siyathemba Local Municipality as the lead employer
- Department of Roads and Public Works as the host employer

BENEFITS OF THE PROJECT:

Dames en Here, radikale transformasie in terme van die provinsie se eiendoms portefeulje is nodig, maar ons kan dit slegs met die hulp van gemeenskapslede bereik. Ek wil graag 'n beroep doen op lede van die gemeenskap om insidente van onwettige besetting van staatsgeboue en die vandalisering daarvan (soos in die geval van Môrewag Hostel); aan die department te raporteer. Volgens 'n nasionale aksie bekend as: '**Operation Bring Back**, is dit die hoofdoel van die regering om beheer te neem van leegstaande en die onwettige besetting van staatsgeboue. Verwaarloosde geboue van hierdie aard dra by tot die verhoging van misdaad en skep ook 'n swak indruk en beeld. Hierdie instandhoudings werk was nodig en het die waarde van die eiendom herstel.

Vandag verskaf dit vir my groot blydskap om te weet dat ons eie gradueerende leerders van Prieska, het bygedra tot die nuwe voorkoms van die Môrewag Koshuis. Juis om die rede is ons trots en het ons 'n verantwoordelikheid om toe te sien na die waardige benutting van hierdie eiendom tot voordeel van die gemeenskap en sy jongmense. Hierdie projek word as 'n landmark beskou weens sy veelvuldige fasette en voordele:

- 'n verwaarloosde gebou wat onwettig beset was, is gerestoureer, die lewensiklus van die eiendom is verleng en 'n nuwe funksie is aan dit toegeken
- Die projek lewer 'n bydrae in terme van die vermeerdering van die aantal beskikbare en gekwalifiseerde Loodgieters, Timmermanne, Elektrisiëns en Messelaars in die provinsie wat wel in die formele arbeidsmark geabsorbeer kan word.

Hierdie gebou word vandag aan die Noord-Kaapse Landelike TVET Kollege oorhanding en hivolgens sal hul verantwoordelik wees vir die operasionalisering daarvan. Die gerestoureerde Môrewag Koshuis sal gebruik word om leerders regoor die Noord-Kaap te akkomodeer wie deel sal vorm van die toekomstige opleidingsprogramme.

CONGRATULATIONS

To all the graduates, congratulations, you have made it thus far. Indeed, your hard work has culminated in this momentous occasion. The graduation ceremony remains one of the most memorable events in anybody's life. This comes at the end of a long journey of academic and social preparations. As a recent graduate myself, I am glad to be the one to remind you; that you are because you took the opportunity to walk through life eager and open to self-improvement and that which is going to best help you evolve, because that is really why you chose to participate in this programme, to evolve as human beings—to grow into more of yourselves, always moving to the next level of understanding, the next level of compassion and growth. Continue to dream even bigger. The impossible is possible if you have a goal and persevere in order to achieve it.

Tata Nelson Mandela said and I quote: "*Young people must take it upon themselves to ensure that they receive the highest education possible so that they can represent us well in future as future leaders,*" close quote. Let this not be the end of your journey, but the beginning. Nothing stops you from becoming an engineer!

Furthermore, I must remind you to use your education to do well, in your household, family and community. Share your knowledge with others youngsters, as this will inspire them.

IN CONCLUSION

In conclusion, ladies and gentlemen, allow me to highlight that we came to Prieska to create a better life for the people of Siyathemba Municipality. In alignment with the

National Development Plan (NDP) it is the aim of this department to transform the economic landscape of this province. We are changing the future of youth. We have faith in you that you will strive to always be better; even for your next generation. Through the dedication and hard work of our graduates here today, who renovated an accommodation facility, you have opened the doors for youth across the entire province.

The legacy of the ANC and its stalwarts is that of selflessness and sacrifice for a greater good. We must never lose sight of the selfless sacrifices of thousands of people, many remain nameless and faceless who gave their lives for the freedom we enjoy today. Graduates present, in honouring these fallen heroes, you have the responsibility to spread your wings and fly, soaring towards economic freedom!

Congratulations and best wishes with your training in the Artisan Apprenticeship Programme.

I thank you!

Baie dankie!