

SPEECH BY THE EXECUTIVE MAYOR, CLLR. M MAPHETLE AT THE BANQUETTE TO WELCOME ROLE PLAYERS IN THE ZONE VI GAMES BENEFITS WORKSHOP FOR SMM's

02 September 2008

Programme Director

Hon MEC Ndleleni Duma

Honoured and Distinguished Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

I have accepted with great enthusiasm the invitation to address you at this event in preparation of your workshop with the SMME sector. I believe it is a very important venture and one that is most often easily forgotten in our rush to prepare for a major event like the SCSA Zone VI Games to be hosted in our city on behalf of South Africa.

We often talk glibly and in a fuzzy way about economic benefits that will accrue from such major events but never take a concerted and deliberate effort to prepare for such benefits to reach the real people they are intended to. The so – called economic spin offs often remain a pipe dream if not properly canvassed, harnessed and focused accordingly as this workshop should do.

It is therefore against this background that I forthwith take this opportunity to commend and extend our gratitude to the national Department of Sports and all other role players in having organized this economic benefits workshop for our SMME's.

Apart from helping our SMME's to prepare for the Zone VI Games and other similar events, I believe that if the SMME's take the opportunities granted, they may help them to position themselves to share in the benefits of a growing economy, through business processes and partnerships where possible.

This platform also gives opportunity to the private sector and agencies of government to help in the implementation of the government vision set in the growth and development strategy of our region.

Accordingly, it is also an issue of paramount importance that we should broaden economic participation amongst our people, in a highly esteemed program referred to as the Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment.

In order to achieve the above, the role of skills development and education, especially amongst women and youth, becomes imperative.

This is so because of the historic fact that our women suffered what we know as triple oppression, which is oppression based on race, gender, and class.

The youth of our country, as the majority of our population, is committed to playing an important role in the reconstruction and development of our land.

In the words of the late ANC President, OR Tambo “The country that does not value its youth does not deserve its future”. Therefore, we need to achieve this task so that we can not only impact on the lives of our people through our principal mandate of accelerated service delivery, but also to inspire long standing confidence, which will be brought about by the role of education and skills development.

When we conclude our business here tomorrow, we should be able to vividly articulate as to what practical steps we will take, to ensure that SMME sector begins to build a requisite skills base that can allow them to grow and expand their business. The ZONE VI Games should not only be the end in itself, but a spring board to achieve this broad goal.

Before I retire from this platform, Programme Director, I herewith also would like to extend, on behalf of our municipality our thanks and commendations to all the partners in this venture, from the private, NGO and the public sectors. This is another brick they are placing in the wall of economic growth that we are building.

Our provincial and regional economies are characterized by varying degrees of people living in the second economy; at this level we need to be project oriented and eradicate unemployment and poverty. Enterprise development should therefore become the cornerstone of our operations, especially in relation to preferential procurement for youth, women and people living with disabilities.

Lastly, Programme Director, we need to refer to the wise words of philosopher and scholar Phillip Adams who said “ ***The future is not some place we are going to, but the one we are creating, the paths to it are made not found, and the activities of making them changes both the maker and the destinations***”. So, let this gathering usher in a new period in the lives of our SMME’s, let us lead them to a better future.

Enjoy the serenity of our Mooi River, the expanse of its banks, the alluring experience of its shopping mall, and the friendship of its people.

You are all welcome.

I thank you.