



**Keynote Address by the Deputy Minister of Transport, Ms Dikeledi Magadzi
(MP) on the Occasion of a Community Imbizo on 18 November 2019 at the MM
Motloug Secondary School Open Sports Field, in Delmas**

MEC of Education in Mpumalanga Honourable Bonakele Majuba MPL,
MEC of Public Works, Roads and Transport Honourable Gillion Mashego
MPL and the Executive Mayor of Victor Khanye Local Municipality, Cllr
Vusi Buda

Introduction and acknowledgements

Let me begin by thanking the community represented here for your invitation to come and share with you opinions about where we should be heading to as a community in the advancement of social, economic and cultural needs.

I wish to thank the organisers of this Imbizo, our public officials in their dedication to ensure broad participation by members of this community in finding solutions to challenges faced and in highlighting the opportunities existing in space.

I also wish to thank my colleagues for their support today as officials elected to further the needs of South Africans and making South Africa a better country for us all.

I know that it is through the efforts of these colleagues that we have been able to find and use public resources to ensure that this Imbizo becomes a success and that they are here today to contribute to the solutions we are here to seek.

Today we are all here to listen, learn and contribute constructively to a tomorrow we shall begin to build collectively today.

Together we have come as South Africans and members of the Delmas community with one purpose in mind, to throw in our bid, all of us in our attempts to share opinions about the opportunities that abound in our beautiful land, including in this locality and the challenges that stifle the enjoyment of those opportunities.

I will emphasise the words “we”, “our”, “us” and “all” throughout this Imbizo, because I believe we all share the pains and the joys our country puts in our way.

Moreover, did we not say in our reconstruction and development programme that we shall get together to build better communities, united in our purpose, to develop each other?

The manifesto of the governing party has today called upon all of us to develop ourselves into citizens and patriots of this our beloved country and for each to hold hands as we build one prosperous, united and cohesive nation.

The role of communities in governance

The National Development Plan warns us that the faces of our children (shall) tell of the future we have crafted and thus the impressions that shall last among our children shall have our collective signature.

The blames for any wrongs of our times shall therefore be shared among all of us and not only the Mayors, Premiers, MEC's, Deputy Ministers and Ministers, but all of us.

Izimbizo are therefore a platform that brings all our views and efforts together into one pot for proper packaging and implementation.

I mention this broad accountability, because I believe governance is the responsibility of all of us.

It is all of us that said in 1955 that the people must govern.

Izimbizo are not platforms through which we always must lament and complain although such opportunity is provided always.

But Izimbizo are a medium through which we not only come together to assess the work of government in our communities, as important as that is, but also to do an introspection of ourselves as communities.

Izimbizo are platforms through which we raise our hands and say to the Programme Director, the elected officials before us and the technical officials accompanying them that we have this or that proposal and we need to know at which door we must knock to find answers.

We as communities carry major responsibilities ourselves, responsibilities of taking care of each other and not keeping quiet to wrong doing.

We as communities carry the responsibility of protecting a school, a bus, a clinic or a post office from vandalism, because these are assets that we own as communities, assets that must service the needs of our children's children.

As communities we carry the responsibility to protect women and children, people with disabilities and elderly people. Those are our responsibilities as a community.

Gender Based Violence

Programme Director,

It remains important that today in this month in which we recommit to the 16 Days of Activism against Gender Based Violence and Femicide, we must certainly discuss our role as a community in dealing with horrors faced by women.

As communities we cannot keep quiet ntate wa ka mo next door a hlekefetsa mme le bana.

Young people cannot keep quiet when a friend at school beats a girlfriend or when another friend harasses his girl classmates.

It is our responsibility to say no.

We cannot keep quiet when at our taxi ranks women are harassed and disrespected.

On our streets, at our bus stops, in our trains and taxis we continue to see women violated and yet we say not a word.

Those among us that are leaders of churches and other faith organizations, teachers at our schools, community leaders of different roles must defend people among us that are vulnerable.

Fellow South Africans,

As regards measures against gender based violence and the murder of women, the President has announced on an emergency action plan, which will be implemented and executed over the next coming six months.

The purpose of this emergency action plan is to respond to the crisis South Africa is faced with. The Plan will strengthen existing measures and introduce new interventions, focusing on five key priorities:

- How to prevent Gender-Based Violence
- Strengthen the law enforcement and the criminal justice system
- Steps to enhance the legal and policy framework
- To ensure adequate care and support for victims
- Empower South African Women economically

However, this can never be successful unless we all throw our weight behind these interventions as communities.

The plan of action announced will be chaired by the Interim Steering Committee located at the Presidency and coordinated by Government and Civil Society Organisations, with the aim of establishing appropriate structures to work on eliminating Gender-Based Violence.

Responding to some of the challenges raised

Today we are here as elected and appointed public officials not bearing a Gucci bag full of pretty papers, but solely wish to take this as an Imbizo in which we get into the crux of our challenges in this community and together plan a way out.

By that it means today we must together develop a structured approach about how, when and by who.

As officials present here we will together with you come up with ideas that we must formalise so that those of us deployed to this community can develop proper plans of addressing the challenges.

We have realised through our visit to Delmas that many challenges remain a concern for many among communities here.

These challenges range from unemployment, to sanitation and water issues, to education, housing, electricity, access roads to other issues raised at various of our visits to this community.

We have noted that chief amongst these challenges raised by the community is the extreme unemployment especially of young people.

More so we have also noted that young women remain the most disadvantaged in that situation.

We must begin by saying we are not alone as a nation with this extreme challenge, it is both a national and international challenge and it continues to increase inequalities among all societies of the world.

Yet, given our own circumstances we have had to do things faster and more effectively through felt and seen impacts, hence the adoption of our ethos and mantra, “khawuleza”.

It is due to the serious impacts and spread of unemployment that South Africa has now held two Investment Conferences led by President Cyril Ramaphosa to raise investments to grow our very stagnant economy and create the needed jobs.

Just last year the president had announced that our objective was to raise \$100 billion – or R1.2 trillion – in new investments over five years with a view to addressing low economic growth and reducing unemployment.

In response to that call investment announcements totalling nearly R300 billion have been made since that time and we are certain that more was raised at the end of the recent Investment Conference including at the African Investment Conference that followed.

The President has also mentioned that these commitments are already turning into investments in factories, equipment and new jobs.

Of the amount announced last year, around R238 billion worth of projects have either been completed or are being implemented, the President has announced.

At the end of the Investment Conference a total of R363 billion had been committed by investors.

In that announcement, the President has also highlighted that the 2019 investment conference will create 412,000 direct jobs and more indirect jobs.

These investments are also important, because of their ability to produce the necessary spin offs such as not only the creation of jobs directly, but also indirectly by ensuring that we create other economic opportunities as other supporting businesses are established to produce and supply products and services.

Government is urgently attending to the following amongst others and this includes:

- Improving educational outcomes;
- Addressing the skills constraint;
- Implementing specific youth employment interventions; and
- Lowering barriers to entry and addressing distorted patterns of ownership through increased competition and small business growth

In addition, the governing party has recently committed to the following:

- Co-locating SMME services with local governments or other government offices and creating a virtual one-stop shop to improve access;
- Making Development Finance more accessible for SMMEs by adopting and using common application templates for both funding and technical support among other solutions.

Social and Economic Transformation: Women Empowerment

In addressing barriers to entry into the economy, Government also understand that women remain the most disadvantaged in our economy and that to an extent their economic position also perpetuates their subordination by men.

This is therefore against the grain of truth that cohesive, vibrant and safe communities also imply inclusive communities to ensure that women play an active economic and developmental role.

To date, however, it is stated that women owned business account for only 38 % and that procurement from government has only yielded 9% of business to women.

It has been suggested that gender inequality in the economy can be approached through concerted effort, a part of which includes setting aside 30-40% of the value of government procurement for women-owned businesses.

Road Safety

Programme Director,

It pleases us today to note that among what we must discuss today also entails issues of safety on our roads.

This is especially important given that we are fast approaching the festive season which sees multitudes of travellers on the road and also a time when we experience a great number of road crashes and deaths on roads.

The crashes on our roads are one of South Africa's biggest challenges, because more than 14000 people die on our roads every year.

These road crashes also cost a lot to our economy.

As a result the World Health Organisation ranks traffic fatalities as the ninth (9) leading course of death, accounting for 3 % of all global death on status of Road Safety report publish for 2018.

The report stated further that, in the middle to low income countries such as South Africa, road fatalities account for major proportion in relation to the rate of mortality in the country.

The world health Organisation indicated that, Road safety epidemic if not curbed would become the secondly leading cause of death globally.

The extent of road fatalities compelled the United Nations General Assembly to adopt a resolution calling for a Decade of Action for Road Safety 2011–2020 (United Nations Decade of Action – UNDA).

Subsequently this led to the development of a Global action plan on road safety. South Africa finds itself in the middle of this global challenge of road crashes, injuries and fatalities.

South Africa is one of the countries with the highest road crash death rates in the world, as stated in the World Health Organisation Global Road Safety Report (2018).

According to the World Health Organisation report, South Africa is currently at number 39 in comparison with other countries and the most appropriate contributory factors are alcohol, not buckling up and speeding.

A large number of those that die or are injured on our roads are breadwinners.

The report further indicated that the total cost of road crashes on South Africa's road network for 2015 amounted to an estimated R162.045 billion per annum which constituted 3.48 of the GDP.

It is a heavy cost to families who have to bear the consequence of tragic loss of life or loss of livelihood as a result of permanent serious or injuries.

A father or a mother not returning from work because they have been involved in a car crash will remain a deep scar in the life of any child.

It is also a heavy cost to those that must tend to victims in the aftermath of a terrifying crash, the paramedics, traffic and ordinary motorists and members of the public on the scene.

Given the extent of the stubbornness with which we approach the road, it is becoming clear that we will not reach the globally agreed 50% reduction in road crash fatalities by 2020.

Nor can it be any different by 2030 unless we seriously consider our behaviour on the road.

Analysis conducted on fatal crashes and fatalities by the Road Traffic Management Corporation indicated that, human factors contribute about 92% on fatal crashes and fatalities, followed by the vehicles which contributes 5%, and Road Environment contribute 3%.

Due to added focus on different road users and in an attempt to tackle human factors, we were able to reduce fatalities over the Easter period.

The number of fatalities decreased by **48%** this Easter from **309** in 2018 to **162** in 2019.

This marks a **decrease of one hundred and forty-seven (147) fatalities**. However, government is still concerned even by a single loss of life on our roads.

This is especially the case when considering that while we have reduced human factors in their contribution to fatalities tyre fitness has cropped up as an increasing problem.

Over the Easter period of 2019 tyre bursts increased astronomically as compared to 82% in 2018. This has translated to an increase of **18%** of tyre burst related incidents during the 2019 Easter Period.

Working together with tyre manufacturing companies, vehicle manufacturers, NGOs and research institutions we remain committed to work with the tyre manufacturing industry of South Africa, including a heightened focus on the illegal tyre industry.

Young people are the most affected

Ladies and gentlemen,

Given the extent to which our own human actions account for the largest part of all road crashes, it remains important that we approach road safety through an understanding of all sectors of society including learners.

In order to build a nation of safer drivers and safer road users we will continue to place our trust in you young people, traffic officials and drivers of tomorrow.

As government we are investing into programmes that will ensure that safer road use is promoted from a young age across society.

This means we are including road safety as an important component of learner education and are working on a programme to ensure that all learners will leave school with a driving license.

The Learner License Programme

Further analysis for Road Fatalities data indicates that, the death rate of young South African drivers is at least five times higher than that of older people.

Surveys and studies have found that young people play a huge part in road carnage with alcohol, excessive and reckless speeding, drunk driving and a general flouting of road rules being some of their vices.

In our drive to ensure the safety of young people on our roads and to ensure that driving becomes a job creating tool, we have introduced Learner Licences.

The Learner License Project was introduced during in partnership with the Department of Basic Education.

The aim of the project is to assist in making sure that South African youth are marketable when entering the job market as well as promoting safe driving skills.

The following objectives must be noted of the Learner License Project which are to:

1. Empower Secondary/High schools learners with knowledge of the K53 method of testing and licensing;
2. Assist learners to obtain legitimate Learners and Driving Licenses;
3. Promote safe driving skills in the driver population of the country; and thus ultimately
4. Reduce the number of crashes and subsequent fatalities involving young people in South Africa through
 - Improving road safety knowledge among the school-going youth of the country; and
 - Defining a holistic approach in managing Learner-Driver License Project and providing a regulatory framework through which the project would be best implemented to attain uniformity.

The second phase of the Learner Licence Project entails the use of **Simulators** and **Practical driving lessons**.

A simulator is an imitation of reality and can assist to demonstrate manoeuvres in a safe practice environment for driving in dangerous conditions and would provide basic procedural skills of driving with a multitude of benefits.

We envisage to gain in the following manner through this project:

- Improved **road safety knowledge** among the youth;
- Change in **attitude and behaviour** of young drivers;
- **Reduction in the rate of fatal crashes and injuries** amongst the youth;

- To ensure that learners in Grade 10 to 12 have acquired legitimate **Learner and Driving Licenses**, and are capacitated to be road safety ambassadors.

Administration and Adjudication of Road Traffic Offences AARTO Bill

Ladies and gentlemen,

The single biggest event for this year's October Transport Month regarding road safety was the launch of the re-vamped Arrive Alive campaign, the 365 Days Road Safety Action Agenda and the launch of the Administrative Adjudication of Road Traffic Offences (ARRTO) Act by President Cyril Ramaphosa.

The President will become the face of the Arrive Alive campaign to ensure that it is given the seriousness it deserves.

The AARTO Act seeks to change road user behaviour, especially driver behaviour through the application of a more stringent method.

This method entails the Point Demerit System which will see non-complying drivers losing points and ultimately losing their driving licenses when they continue to disobey the law.

The re-classification of the more serious road traffic offences like drunken driving to Schedule 5 of the Criminal Procedure Act will continue to receive high priority in our endeavour and quest for a mandatory minimum sentence for 'drunken driving, inconsiderate, reckless and negligent driving.

Ending Corruption

Working together with the National Anti-Corruption Unit and the Directorate for Priority Crime Investigations, we continue to arrest traffic officers who instead of issuing fines for traffic violations, demand gratification or bribes from motorists;

It is commonly known that each and every citizen has rights and so too it is known that citizens have responsibilities too.

As road users we must show we are careful by ensuring that we do not walk and text our friends or view videos while we walk on streets.

Amongst us must be those that will ensure we behave properly on the road, by using pedestrian crossing or other safer parts of the road to cross the road.

While some of our busy streets remain hazardous to pedestrian mobility, solutions continue to be implemented through re-design of urban roads.

We might soon have to review speed limits in places with high pedestrian road use. But many urban roads are already being re-designed to ensure safety for pedestrians.

Scholar transport

Given that so many learners use scholar transport, an important part for scholar transport is both the safety of the vehicle and a driver who obeys the rules of the road at all times.

We believe that safer scholar transport, will not be defined only by a nicer vehicle, but will have to promote the employment of more professional drivers.

Yet learners, we also have a responsibility of buckling up and therefore it must be the first thing on our minds to find a seatbelt in our scholar transport.

Un-roadworthy and inappropriate vehicles

Programme Director,

We are concerned that in many parts of our country a large number of people, including learners, are being transported in public transport vehicles that are not roadworthy, mostly overloaded or not even appropriate to carry human beings.

Discussions are continuing between the National Department of transport, its entities, provincial government and municipalities to improve the management and governance of scholar transport.

In conclusion I wish to urge all of us to participate and contribute freely without fear to discussions that shall unfold.

Only a cohesive people, united as one, can ensure a present and a future that must be without the extreme poverty, unemployment and the inequality we see all around us.

Each of us is here today to collectively find out among ourselves what can be done to ensure that opportunities are made available to women and youth who find themselves unemployed.

It is today upon us all to find out if the young men and women who have completed their studies this year and the years before are informed of the career opportunities that await them in society and in our economy.

Today each of us is asked to make suggestions to the challenges faced by women, elderly people, children and people with disabilities.

Thank you all