



**Remarks by the Honourable Deputy Minister of Transport,  
Ms Dikeledi Magadzi (MP) on the Occasion of the Formal Opening  
of Musekwa Road, D3671, Limpopo Province, at the Musekwa  
Thusong Service Centre, Makhado on 18 October 2020**

Programme Director, Cllr Tshililo

MEC for Public Works, Roads and Infrastructure Mr., Dickson Masemola  
MEC for Transport and Community Safety, Ms. Mavhungu Lurule-  
Ramakhanya

Executive Mayor of Vhembe District, Cllr. D.A Nenguda

Local Mayor of Makhado Municipality, Cllr. N.S Munyai

His Majesty King T.P Mphephu Ramabulana Ramabulana

Community Leaders Present

All Protocols Observed

## **Introduction**

It is a great honour to participate in this very auspicious event in which we formally open the **MUSEKWA ROAD D3671** and to formally present the road to the people of the Vhembe District, its true custodians.

Today we are home to celebrate this ceremony notable as proof of our unwavering mandate to build and provide infrastructure.

This, as we connect our people safely to centres of education, business, health, industry, recreation, and the many other needs we have as individuals and as communities.

Our effort in the building of these roads is also based on our aim to establish an integrated transport network for the efficient and cost effective transportation of both goods and persons

Furthermore this allows us to more effectively resuscitate rural and township economies including the promotion of rural and village tourism which we prioritised along the economic stimulus package.

The enabling of these economies will ensure we respond to the loud calls for job creation and overall improvement in the lives of our people.

The opening of this road is thus not accidental but a product of the priorities we have set ourselves as a Department, as the Ministry of Transport, and as government broadly.

More importantly these targets we seek to achieve as directed by you the people of South Africa.

Today President Cyril Ramphosa has gain re-emphasised the urgent need to accelerate economic recovery and stimulation.

## **The Economic Recovery Plan**

## **Situational analysis**

Prior to the onset of the pandemic, the economy was in recession, the rate of unemployment was at its highest level in over a decade, poverty and inequality remained deeply entrenched, and the fiscal situation was deteriorating due to lower than expected revenue earnings and growing sovereign debt.

## **COVID-19 Pandemic Impacts**

And this economic recession has been worsened by the COVID 19 pandemic that has spared no country in the world.

According to StatsSA “Further employment losses were reported in the construction and transport industries with 74 000 and 38 000 jobs respectively.

This has been the impact across many other sectors and is shown by an annualised 51% loss in our economy and a major decline in the incomes of households, which has sent many families into very desperate situations.

Be that as it may, a country and as a people we continue to soldier on as we implement not only relief packages, but equally constructing a new economy.

The very event we enjoy today is a true example of the extent to which we have continued to persevere in our efforts to eradicate poverty, inequality and the widespread unemployment, especially of women, persons with disabilities and young people who remained excluded.

## **Infrastructure Build**

Ladies and gentlemen,

The calls for infrastructure build as a vehicle for economic growth and social development have been made on the following premises:

Our democratic constitution, which demands redress in the location of social and economic infrastructure;

The National Development Plan, which recognises serious gaps in the provision, location and maintenance of infrastructure and recognises inversely the economically enabling role of infrastructure;

The governing party's Election Manifesto, which recognises infrastructure build as a major source of employment and a means central to the eradication of poverty and redress of the glaring inequalities we face.

Just a few days ago the President of the Republic announced the importance of road infrastructure expansion and maintenance of as part of the Road Stimulus Package.

It is stated in the Plan that and I quote:

“Through a major infrastructure programme and a large-scale employment stimulus, the plan aims to respond to the immediate economic impact of COVID-19”, unquote:

It is envisaged that this will speed up creation, especially the creation of 800 000 new jobs in the economy.

The Roads Stimulus Plan as one of the greatest beneficiaries of this Plan will see greater budgetary emphasis given to the construction and maintenance of roads to contribute to economic stimulation and recovery.

It is thus clear from the aforesaid commitments we have made that the development of road infrastructure will continue to serve as a very crucial social and economic enabler.

### **October Transport Month**

Fellow South Africans,

The Department of Transport declared the October month a Transport Month in 2005 at the Transport Lekgotla held with Provinces and Transport Entities.

At its inception, the focus of the October Transport Month (OTM) was to create awareness on the benefits of public transport, especially its ability to contribute effectively to the reduction of congestion on our roads.

It remains a farsighted and innovative way to reduce congestion, save lives on the road and reduce carbon emissions responsible for adverse climate change.

Beyond the commitment to these noble ideals has been to adapt the Transport Month to a month in which we also showcase achievements in the transport sector by both the private and public sectors.

October month is also dedicated towards raising awareness on the important role the transport sector is playing in shaping our economic landscape.

Today as we officially handover Road D3671, we are indeed also celebrating the collective efforts including those of communities in bringing this project to fruition.

### **Collectively Responsibility to Protect Assets**

Ladies and gentlemen,

These assets remain our heritage as a people, heritage to be enjoyed by generations still to be born.

Being the custodians of this heritage embedded in the infrastructure we have built, means we must protect these gains. It means we must protect our assets collectively as a people.

### **Road Safety**

On the other hand we need also to ensure that these assets that we have built as our heritage must be to the safe use and benefit of all.

The Department commemorates OTM with the knowledge that South Africa's road death toll remains unacceptably high with road accidents taking a massive toll on society.

On the other hand we must expand the definition of road safety to include safe access to transport infrastructure.

It means women, persons with disabilities, children and the elderly must be able to use these assets freely and safely without any threats to their lives or well-being.

All infrastructure that is being built today must show our commitment towards universal access in the design of transport infrastructure.

Only in achieving such broader benefits shall we truly arrive at the South African transport system we want, the South Africa envisaged in the National Development Plan.

We must however commend the project developers for the inclusive character in which the project unfolded.

### **Evolution of the D3671 Road Project**

Programme Director,

In addressing the Rural Access Road Development Programme, the Department received Table B5 Project Lists from all 9 provinces for funding, however, with special focus on projects from rural provinces.

Road D3671 (T812) of the Musekwa village in the Vhembe District was identified for development.

After the assessment of all projects submitted the project RAL/T812: Design and Construction of 3KM of Road D3671 towards Musekwa in the Vhembe District of Limpopo Province was recommended as our 2020 OTM Rural Access Road project.

### **Project Beneficiaries**

The project benefited the following target market as follows:-

- 25 Women
- 25 Youth
- 2 Persons with Disabilities
- Total – 52 beneficiaries

While we may have aspired for more to have benefitted, we must commend the project managers for adhering to the important requirement for more inclusive economic participation.

### **Localisation**

Programme Director,

It is important to point out that the project also emphasised localisation of personnel recruited to the project.

We are proud to mention that a total of 22 local beneficiaries received training in the following areas.

- Establishment and preparation of a work area
- Handling, transporting and utilisation of hazardous materials

- Identification, description and use of materials in construction
- Implementation of road safety procedures
- Application of health and safety in a construction work area
- Erection and maintenance of guardrails
- Installation of road signs

Equally important to mention is that all subcontractors who benefited from the project were sourced from a locally established database approved by the community structures.

The process was supported by all the local stakeholders and interested parties.

These facts are critically important to note, because many a time projects delay, pick up serious cost overruns or are not be completed when disputes arise due to processes.

### **District Development Model**

Cooperation and perceived and felt fairness of processes are very important ingredients in the completion of projects.

Such cooperative arrangements especially involving the participation of communities in project decisions are essential elements in our recently unveiled District Development Model (DDM).

The DDM will coordinate implementation at local level and bridge the gap between the three spheres of government to ensure better coordination, coherence and integration of government planning and interventions.

It is our firm belief that the DDM will be more effective in bringing government closer to the people.

### **Traditional Leadership**

Your Majesty,

We continue to depend on the crucial role played by traditional leadership in providing the essential link between national government and local communities.

It is thus for that reason that we will remain committed to the promotion of relations between all spheres of government and traditional authorities and leadership of these authorities

This relates equally to relations to economic development and land use management.

It is indeed true that the District Development Model will go a long way towards concretising this relationship.

### **Gender-based violence**

MECs, Your Majesties, Ladies and gentlemen,

While today remains celebratory, it is important that we raise a matter of national importance and a matter that tears at our social fabric and the very social cohesion we strive for as a nation.

This relates to matter of gender based violence around which we cannot be silent and around which we must all unite in partnership.

It is an important that we must raise the issue of gender-based violence even in this celebratory environment, because even as we speak a women is being abused somewhere.

It is also important, because we attach the economic empowerment of women to the broader and more effective solutions to the position of women and girls.

It means we must constantly ask ourselves whether women are equitably represented in the projects we are implementing.

This we must ask ourselves, because the independence and self – sufficiency women rests in the equitable distribution of economic opportunity.

We must raise this point because the economic/ financial dependence of women on men remains a major source of their abuse and the violence so brutally committed against women and girls.

## **Conclusion**

Today, I stand humbly before all gathered to take a stand and partner with efforts against gender-based violence and the murder of women and girls.

Ours should therefore be to build and open up new roads to a new world and a new society that we shall build together as free men and women.

This is a society in which women must thrive with the self-sufficiency and the independence that must allow them to live their lives freely and with dignity.

Let us actively support President Cyril Ramaphosa's declaration made in 2019 that we must intensify the fight against gender-based violence and create safer communities and responsive social systems.

I thank you all.

May God Bless South Africa