



**ADDRESS BY THE SEDIBENG DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY EXECUTIVE
MAYOR, COUNCILLOR MAHOLE SIMON MOFOKENG ON THE
OCCASION OF THE MAYORAL WELCOME RECEPTION OF THE
2009 FOUR NATIONS UNDER17 TOURNAMENT**

13 March 2009.

I am very much pleased to convey to each and every one of you the warmest greetings of the people of Sedibeng, Councillors of Sedibeng District and its Local Municipalities of Emfuleni, Midvaal and Lesedi.

- Programme Director;
- Fellow Councillors in the Sedibeng District and its Local Municipalities of Midvaal, Lesedi and Emfuleni;

- The Leadership of our South African Football Association, and their counter parts from represented National squads;
- Senior officials from our Municipalities;
- Distinguished guests;
- Ladies and gentlemen;
- All protocol observed.

It is indeed unfortunate that many soccer-loving people of our participating 4 African Nations have missed the spectacular christening of our International Under17 Human Rights Tournament, which comes 8 days before the 49th anniversary of the 21st March 1960 Sharpeville massacre.

The organization of this event is an extremely important statement in the political, social and economic life of our sub-region. This Tournament is a vindication of generations of victims and survivors of aggressive and destabilizing apartheid-sponsored raids and massacres which took place in Matola, Manzini, Gaborone, and our own Sharpeville,

Evaton, Soweto, etc; who against all odds, fought and won against White domination, supper exploitation, colonialism and increased attacks on the rights of black countrymen and women. It is for that reason that our generation will continue to win in whatever national programme it embarks on because we have also decided not to forget in a hurry.

A consequence of our Tournament Organizing Committee, which is made out of the South African Football Association (SAFA), its Sedibeng-arm and the Sedibeng District Municipality; the historic 1st International Under17 Human Rights Tournament, is organized a year ahead of two World-acclaimed events marking the 50th anniversary of the Sharpeville massacre and the 2010 Fifa World Cup Tournament.

Our Tournament which takes place, very few kilometers away from the scene of crime, where the blood of innocent people turned the soil red, also happens to take place in a South Africa which will in a few months to come, celebrate the 15th anniversary of its freedom and democracy.

Now, Comrades and colleagues,

All these coincidences are made in heaven and have blessings of our ancestors who have been killed in many of our townships and far-away lands, whilst waging a National Democratic Struggle alongside their selfless neighbours, for the creation of conditions for responsible economic growth and development by supporting, promoting and developing investments, tourism and built relations amongst sister-countries; from business and trade to science and technology, education and culture. We need to fast-track this implementation.

Brothers and sisters, let me also assure everyone that Sedibeng District Municipality treasures and values its relations and will continue to work hard with Municipalities and Houses of Traditional Leaders in other countries in Africa and abroad.

This International Under17 Human Rights Tournament is our first, and above all about our people. This and all our programmes must reach and touch our constituencies.

A strong bond amongst our Municipalities will only benefit African and its people.

It is in that context, **colleagues** that the Sedibeng District Municipality was amongst the first to condemn the recent spate of xenophobic attacks that once took South Africa by storm. That kind of counter-revolutionary action does not have a place in our new South Africa.

Ladies and gentlemen, I have no doubt that you won't regret your choice to Sedibeng and to participate in the tournament as you will enjoy the warmth and support of our soccer-loving people.

I welcome each and every one of you to the land of Inkosi Albert Luthuli, Oliver Reginald Tambo, Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela, Robert Smagalis Sobukwe, Steve Bantu Biko, Joe Slovo, and invite you to remind fellow South Africans staying in your countries to vote on the 22nd April 2009.

You are welcomed to a land where the vision espoused in the Freedom Charter continues to inspire millions in their struggles for a better future.

The Charter captures the historic demands of the people of South Africa for a united, non-racial, non-sexist democratic society, and the interventions of our Government has been aimed at balancing these multiple objectives and ensuring that the State contribute to the growth and development our Sub-region. This is a vision that the ANC-led progressive movement will never abandon.

Ladies and gentlemen, I hope and trust that our paths will cross again when we meet at our 2010 Fifa World Cup Tournament Fan Parks in few months to come. Let us enjoy ourselves.

I thank you very much for your patience.