



**WELCOME ADDRESS BY THE SEDIBENG DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY  
EXECUTIVE MAYOR, CLLR. MAHOLE SIMON MOFOKENG ON  
THE OCCASION OF THE 2009 NATIONAL WATER MONTH  
FUNCTION HELD AT VAAL MARINA, BOSCHOP.**

1 April 2009.

- Mr. Johan Claassens, Programme Director;
- Ms. Lindiwe Hendricks, Minister of Water Affairs and Forestry;
- Mr. Paul Mashatile, Premier of Gauteng;
- Ms. Pam Jako, Director-General of the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry;
- Fellow councillors, present;
- Dr. Snowy Khoza, the TCTA,
- Dr. Benny Bokaba, Executive Director of Sasol;
- Mr. Jacob Maroga, CEO of Eskom;

- Our esteemed guests, comrades and colleagues;
- Representatives of various media houses;
- The people of Sedibeng;

We are outstanding and special in our contributions to the development of our lovely region, province and neighbouring region of the Free State with regards to preserving our water resources and public life in general. The Sedibeng District Municipality is not only honoured, but privileged to be associated with this very unique Campaign – the annual South African National Water Month, one that takes place under an appropriate theme of *Water Is life* – securing the nations needs across generations.

**Ladies and gentlemen,**

It is my greatest pleasure and privilege to welcome our successful National Water Month, a partnership between the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry (DWAF),

Trans-Caledon Tunnel Authority (TCTA), Eskom and SASOL and also to welcome all participating individuals and guests to Sedibeng – the river city, a place marked with all opportunities for growth.

I would therefore like to commend all the participating stakeholder organizations for undertaking this initiative to meet the growing water demands of Eskom and SASOL in the Mpumalanga Highveld Region, which other people of a lesser caliber would have done probably everything to avoid.

The scheme transfers water from our own Vaal Dam to the Knoppiesfontein diversion structure near Secunda, which then directs water according to needs into either the nearby Trichardsfontein Dam for Eskom's power plant or the Bosjesspruit Dam for Sasol.

George Bernard Shaw once said, "The problem with political jokes is that they get elected." The most radical revolutionary will become a preservationist the day after the revolution. In Sedibeng, we are preservationists.

Please, allow me at this point in juncture to deviate from my brief and to entice you with some of our strategies and programmes which I have no doubt that you will all find very much impressive:

- Sedibeng from being the source of major smoke-stack driven heavy industrial air pollution, coal and wood smoke from our residential places. For that reason, Sedibeng has always occupied its rightful place in the lead role in the National *Basa Nje Ngo Magogo Clean Fires Campaign*.
- Sedibeng from facing serious water pollution challenges in its river systems and water bodies of the Klipriver and Blesbokspruit which are polluted from

runoffs from industrial areas, townships and waste water treatment works.

- The Vaal River is sometimes contaminated by raw sewerage spillages due to the aging infrastructure in Emfuleni.
- We are progressing with our Vaal 21 initiative, involving our neighbouring counterparts on the other side of the River, to see how best we can utilize it for the benefit of all the people.
- Our sewer system is currently running at its full capacity, meaning any breakdown due to normal mechanism and maintenance needs reduces the system capacity thereby resulting in the effluent treated not to the required. Sedibeng has put forward strategic programmes, namely, precinct development and the Vaal 21. The challenge is that these programmes could only fly if corresponding development potential can be supported by the Sewer System in the Region.

Given this challenges of sanitation services as described above, it means that the Sedibeng Regional Sewer Project has to happen for the Sedibeng GDS to materialize. The planning of the Regional Sewer Scheme is far advanced wherein service providers have been appointed to tackle the issues of technical institutional and financing.

**Lastly,**

Let me revisit my assignment to introduce the Minister of Water Affairs and Forestry, Mrs. Lindiwe Benedicta Hendricks.

She was a Member of Parliament from 1994 to 1999, and served in the following Portfolio committees;

- Member of the joint standing committee on Intelligence,
- Member of the Constitutional Affairs Committee and the Ad hoc Committee on the quality of the life and status of women,

- Member of the Justice and Constitutional Development Committee.

Comrade Minister, let me use this opportunity to present you to your audience.

I believe it is my place to tell those who have suffered in the past and those who have taken a conscience decision to take part in our just course to reconstruct and develop our Country, that water itself is indeed an agent of giving life, not only to human but to everything that leaves on mother-earth. It is a basic right.

I also do believe on the importance of reminding colleagues, about the abject sufferings of our fellow brothers and sisters north of the Limpopo River – that should also become a challenge to all of us, especially government and the private sector.

**Comrades and colleagues,**

In reiterating an advice by President Jacob Zuma; "Please use your votes wisely to vote for a political party which will bring a difference to the lives of all our people on the 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2009, when our countrymen and women will visit the polling stations". And, I want to qualify the statement further by saying; "that should be a political party which we can entrust with our precious lives and one which has got good track record in services deliver". Our programmes and strategies alluded to earlier in my address speak volumes about that commitment to bring about a better life to all.

**Colleagues**, water will forever remain an essential tool to help us put together bricks and concrete in our work to build a united nation in South Africa.

**Ladies and gentlemen**, you are most welcomed in Sedibeng.