



Address by the Sedibeng District Municipality Executive Mayor, Cllr. Mahole Simon Mofokeng on the occasion of the District Wide Mayoral Imbizo held on the 03rd December 2009, in Evaton in Sedibeng

- Program Director;
- Executive Mayors and Speakers of our Local Municipalities;
- Members of the Mayoral Committee and fellow Councillors;
- Our guests; amongst which are leaders of the ruling party in Sedibeng, business and other political parties and organs of civil society present;
- Members of the public and of the media;
- Most importantly the people of Sedibeng; and,
- Ladies and gentlemen

I am pleased to be with you at this important District Wide Mayoral Imbizo, which comes ahead of much deserved 2009 festive season recess, for our councilors and later our staff and our people in general.

On the 16 Days of Activism Campaign Against Women and Children

Abuse: It is important to recognize and appreciate that this District Wide Mayoral Imbizo comes in the midst of crucial developments unfolding in our country.

A few days ago, government, civil society and various partners launched the 16th Days of Activism Campaign on No Violence against Women and Children under the theme – *Do Not Look Away, Act against Abuse*.

Since 1994, Government has placed legislations to redress the wrongs affecting women and children. The Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination are passed to amongst other, to provide us with an opportunity for our women and children to have equal enjoyment of their rights and freedom. Our duty and responsibility going forward, is to ensure that we defend these gains.

Program Director; Our District Wide Imbizo further comes exactly a day after we have all observed the World Aids Day – which has again afforded our people, both infected and affected in Sedibeng and the world over, with a much needed platform to come together and look at progress made and the plans going forward in our day-to-day struggles against HIV and AIDS.

Although a decade away from starting to save lives, the news on the breakthrough in the discovery of a new vaccine – proudly South African, coupled with changes in our policies as outlined by the State President, Cde. Jacob Zuma yesterday, is indeed an indication that victory is certain.

I want to recommit this Council, together with its Local Municipalities and our stakeholders - in the fight against HIV/ and AIDS, and to lead in the campaigns to continue to assist members of our broader communities by going into people's homes to offer assistance to families struggling with the triple burden of poverty, disease and the stigma associated with HIV and AIDS.

On Service Delivery Protest: You will realise that service delivery protests have recently plagued most parts of our country and our District Municipality is no exception. Without denying our people their right to protest, we noted with concern, the destruction and violence accompanying some of the recent protests, particularly the damage caused to public and private property in the Sebokeng incidents where hawkers' stalls were damaged and streets barricaded with huge stones and other items.

Fellow Residents, we are aware that while the communities may be raising their genuine service delivery concerns, some of these may be tainted by people who have ulterior motives.

Hence our strong condemnation of all criminal acts in the form of violence, destruction of State and private properties under the guise of "service delivery protests".

I call on all our Councillors, Ward Committees and Community Development Workers to work with Organs of civil society in ensuring that any service delivery issues are properly raised with government through available channels.

I further call upon our communities within our localities to afford our Local Municipalities an opportunity to consider their service delivery related concerns raised through various channels put in place by government for that purpose.

The Mayoral Committee decided as part of ensuring public participation and reporting back to our communities on the service delivery challenges and achievements, to visit some parts of our District Municipality in conjunction with our Local Municipalities. This will among other assist to alleviate service delivery protests before they happen.

Comrades and friends,

We are here today to present to you the progress made for the past twelve months since the appointment of the current leadership on the 3rd of December 2008.

We are going to report with pride on the following achievements;

On Reinventing our Economy: Working together with our people and our local municipalities we have achieved more in fulfilling our constitutional obligation of giving priority to the basic needs of the community and to promote their social and economic needs by accelerating the process of basic services delivery infrastructural developments including supporting, consolidation and expansion of the economic sectors in our region.

As part of the consolidation and the expansion of the metal, energy and construction sectors, working in partnership with GEDA we have established a Steel Forum. In addition a Service provider was appointed to develop the sector strategy.

Dear Residents of Sedibeng, this will see the growth of the steel/metal, energy, construction and related industries in the region which is aligned to Asgisa and the Apex priority related to industrial policy to create employment opportunities in our region.

We have provided strong and visionary local political leadership to the business community by launching a factory-to-factory visit whose aim is to consolidate and enhance the confidence of the business community in our area to the leadership of the government therefore encouraging the retention and growth of the existing enterprises. This is starting to bear positive results as it can be seen by expansion of some of the existing businesses.

The retail sector is realising growth in that there is an investment to the tune of about R400million to our area developing Makro Warehouse and Builders' Warehouse in Bedworthpark including further expansion of the Evaton Plaza.

There is an interest shown in investing further in the retail industry in our region though the ERP's Eastern Precinct, which includes the commercial housing project.

The Coca-cola South Africa has also finalised signing of all necessary legal documentation with Lesedi Local Municipality to invest another R400million in the process for the drawing of the spring water from underground.

The Karan Beef is also investing hundreds of million rand in the process to convert the gas coming out the animal excretion into a clean renewable energy.

Moreover, **ladies and gentlemen**, an incentive policy to further attract and retain industries in the region as a mechanism to fight poverty through creating and retaining employment opportunities was developed and is in the process of implementation with the Locals.

In responding to the call of empowering SMMEs in our region, the Sedibeng District Municipality has created an SMME database to improve the participation of SMMEs in our regional economy. In addition, an

SMME Summit was held to engage with SMMEs so as to develop mechanisms to assist them to develop and grow.

The Sedibeng District Municipality and its Local Municipalities supply chain policies has been amended to accommodate cooperatives as well as ensure 30% bias to local cooperatives, contractors and corporates.

We are also proud to mention amongst some of our key achievements registered in the period under review, which include the Zone of Opportunity, library, sports fields in Vischuil and KwaZenzele.

On Renewing our Communities: Whilst the Evaton Renewal Project will remain the government's main urban renewal program in our region we are of a view that it is not receiving the attention it deserve from our provincial government as such we have raised this concerns with both GPG and the PEC of the ruling party, the African National Congress.

In addition to the above, the SDM and ELM committed to support and fully participate in Evaton Renewal Project by identifying and financing various projects in the broader program.

As a results of the challenges and the need to be more economical in terms of time and finance we have deviated from our original position of sourcing R40million through loan with DBSA by resolving in the MAYCO yesterday the 2nd December 2009 to source R20million from our reserves and invest it into the Evaton Renewal Project where R10.6m will be used

to implement the labour intensive project of paving five streets previously identified.

Our intention and commitment is to appoint through normal procurement process the project manager who will in return working hand in hand with the EDF and council select the local small entities to undertake project execution. The balance of this money will be used for further paving projects to be identified once the design has been approved by relevant authorities.

In addition to various contributions it has done to the ERP the ELM is building a most needed service to this part of our region, the Fire Fighting Station which I believe the communities of Evaton in particular will find it useful.

On Tuesday the 1st December 2009 our Political Steering Committee received a progress report from the service providers appointed to carry out feasibility study on possible precincts project/s that can be undertaken by the council in the communities of Sebokeng, Ratanda, Mamello, Sicelo, Bophelong and Boipatong, as part of our endeavour and commitment to renew our communities.

For the people of Sharpeville the projects are at the stage of being executed because the contractor to be appointed will be on site by the second week of January 2010.

Through the 20 Priority Township Projects (20 PTP) financed and sponsored by the GPG as well as our own initiatives as informed by the IDP linked service delivery programmes, the SDM and its Locals have decided to include other townships in the programme.

We are also proud to mention that under this programme we have tarred about twenty five interconnecting streets in the former black townships, and the programme is continuing.

The Municipal Housing Development Plan to facilitate future housing development and ensure inclusionary housing provision and unblock problems at places such as Mamello, River Glen, etc, has been completed and a Housing Coordinating Forum established. This will now pave way for the Shack down programme in communities that are affected and ensure that roll-out plans are developed in Local Municipalities.

The SDM in conjunction with our Midvaal Local Municipality has successfully intervened to achieve the approval of the investment to the tune of R7billion into the Doornkuil Project for development of eighteen thousands units mixed housing project. There will be creation of over 30 000 temporary jobs during the construction phase of the project and 40 000 permanent jobs post construction. The project will be implemented over a period of eight year.

The R59 corridor is emerging strongly the future economic nodal point for our district municipal area. These can be seen growth of the two important

sectors for the economic growth namely, the secondary sector represented by manufacturing and construction, as well as tertiary sector represented by the development of tourists products like the Golf Estates etc.

To further facilitate growth as well as renewal of our communities in our Municipality, we must provide a sustainable transport infrastructure, and in that regard, we had a successfully Transport Summit, whose primarily objective was to provide progress report on the development of our Integrated Transport Plans and lobby for buy in of all stakeholders to the completion of our transport plans.

Our ITP seeks to achieve amongst others, enhanced social upliftment, economic growth and improved quality of life of all our people through provision of integrated, safe, reliable, frequent, affordable, accessible and convenient public transport services, facilities and road infrastructure.

On Reviving our Environment: We are proud to inform you the people of the Vaal region that the process of the development and speedy implementation of the Sedibeng Regional Sewer Scheme to build a major new regional sewage plant that will serve the demand for sewer purification in the region and to feed treated waste water into the Vaal River system is on track.

The Sedibeng District Municipality is continuing to play a strategic planning and regional coordination role at the levels of the Political, Technical, and Project Steering Committees. To date, the sewer plant site has been identified and approved for further technical studies. The MSA Section 78(1) decision has been taken, i.e. assessment of direct/indirect costs and benefits, capacity, re-organisation, impact on development, and views of organised labour has been established; and the decision to establish and appoint the Project Management Office has been taken and the company appointed.

We have implemented the DEAT's "Clean Fires" Programme in the Sedibeng Region to improve air quality in residential areas. This was achieved through:

- Successfully launching the Clean Fires Campaign. Supporting the local Basa Njengo Magogo (BnM) campaigns through business plan development for funding; and
- More than 300 community members and officials from the Sedibeng Region, City of Joburg, Fezile Dabi District Municipality and Ekurhuleni Metro Municipality were trained on the basic principles of Basa Njengo Magogo. The BNM methodology will be rolled out further at local municipality level.

On Reintegrating Our Region: Council will be spending R17m to erect tourism and directional signage, which will make our Region much easier,

exciting and fun to drive in. The Tender will be advertised early next year. In addition to these we will be upgrading our traffic signs to enhance the safety and security of our people.

The appointment of the new administration both in Gauteng and Free State Provincial Governance, post elections 2009 has affected the progress achieved in terms of the Vaal 21; however the process has been put in place to get it back on track.

On Releasing our Human Potential: The District Sport Council in identified sporting codes was established, through this Council the SDM will be able to fully participate in provincial sports as well as nurture the potential of people of the Vaal through sports and recreation.

As part of our commitment to sports development we will be investing millions of rand in upgrading of the three local sports facilities all found in ELM due to their strategic location as part of preparing them to be ready for use by the soccer teams of the countries that will stay in our area as the base camp during the 2010 World Soccer Tournament.

Cde Program Director, Having said this, I want to pause at this stage to acknowledge the presence of Captains of the following Football Clubs, which have done well to win 1st and 2nd Prizes in the Heritage Tournament, and are with us here today;

- Evaton Stars;

- LSB Football Club;
- Barcelona Football Club; and the
- Junior Lions and Happiness Bros.

I therefore wish to congratulate them and call them to the fore to come and receive their prizes. Keep up the good work by taking our youth from drugs and alcohol abuse and trouble. Let us continue to invest in our youth – who are the future.

We hosted the under seventeen four Nations Cup early this year.

In our endeavor for sports development particularly soccer, the SDM has partnered with the captain of our National Squad Mr. Aaron Mokoena to form the Aaron Mokoena foundation.

All our youth centres continue to improve the services rendered to the young people of our district. The increase in the number of internet knockings bears a testimony to the importance and the usefulness of these centres to our young people. Our youth, our leader of tomorrow, must use these centres to gain access to information and knowledge to assist them in shaping their future.

Whilst we are proud of the achievement in so far as these services are concerned we have however appointed a service provider to conduct a study so that we can scientifically showcase the impact of these youth services to our young people.

In the process of establishment of our regional arm of the National Youth Development Agency,

NYDA we are bringing together all the youth services organisations linked to various sector departments under one central command.

In addition to being the year for the World Soccer Tournament the year 2010 is also special to the people of the Vaal in particular, the country and the world in general in that it is the 50th Anniversary of March 21st which came to be popularly known as the Sharpeville shooting.

In collaboration with the local, provincial, national and international stakeholders the day will be celebrated in style.

From our side the program that will run from February 2010 till September 2010 is already developed and will be presented to the various stakeholders for their contributions. This is part of our history and our heritage as nation.

As Sedibeng we are also talking to the local big business to contribute towards the fund for the rebuilding of one house that was destroyed during the Boipatong Massacre of the 17th June 1992. The agreement between us the survivors of that fate-full night is that we are going to assist them visit Robben Island and the official opening of the Parliament of the Republic of South Africa, as part of reconciliation process.

We are committed and share a zero tolerance to crime in our region. In this regard we are continuously improving and upgrading our CCTV street

surveillance system in Vereeniging, Sharpeville, Sebokeng and Evaton and are considering integration with other local municipal systems for improved management in partnership with the private sector.

To enhance and improve health service delivery, the Sedibeng District Municipality has requested and received 8 brand new additional ambulances as you would have seen them exhibited throughout the day.

In our continued fight against the scourge of HIV and AIDS, we dare not rest for our fight is not over. The Sedibeng District Municipality is proud to be part of a campaign held in partnership with Seekers Tower, the District tested more than 20 000 people, mostly youth, during open Voluntary Counselling and Testing (VCT) days.

We are also proud to mention that the District received unqualified audit for 2007/2008 financial year. This is an excellent achievement for our region and indicates our commitment to fight mismanagement in our administration. However we are aware of the areas of improvement and shall focus on these in the following year.

On Good and Financially Sustainable Governance: Our District and its Local Municipalities are continuing to receive unqualified reports from the Auditor General, and we must sustain that.

In a show of confidence to the manner in which we manage public resources, National Treasury has allocated to us R168m, which will be paid over a period of four years, and of which R93m is expected to be

transferred by the end of June 2010, of which over R60m will be spend on the Sharpeville Precincts in preparations for the 50th Anniversary of Sharpeville Massacre as well as the 2010 World Soccer Tournament.

Yesterday we served before the council an item on the First Quarter Report outlining the successes we have achieved in executing our even Key Priority Areas.

The overall performance across Council is good with improvements being delivered in most Council services when compared to 2008/2009 financial year.

Council was judged by the Auditor-General during the previous financial year in which we got an unqualified report and we have been awarded an award of “**Ambassadors for Clean Audit**” recently by the Minister for Corporate Governance and Traditional Affairs, Hon. Sicelo Shiceka.

We have also won a price on the category of the Record Management in terms of the Prevention of Access to Information Act.

On Vibrant Democracy: During the period under review, we have had not less than 14 oversight and outreach programmes, including IDP sector meetings covering, women, business, ex-combatants and religious groups.

We have successfully launched Youth and Women councils as part of our sector work in our process of deepening democracy. We have established

the petitions' Committee to afford our communities an opportunity to raise with the council any matter of their concern.

On our Approach to 2010 World Cup Soccer Tournament: Though we are not a host city as Sedibeng we have adopted the 2010 Strategy in August 2008, in line with and informed by our Growth and Development Strategy. The aim of the Strategy is to position Sedibeng properly to benefit from the 2010 World Soccer Tournament mainly through tourism attraction exploiting our competitive advantage of a distance from Johannesburg.

The Key Thrusts of the Strategy are the following:

- Tourism development and promotion;
- Safety and Security;
- Urban Renewal; and
- Soccer Development.

As reported earlier on the precincts projects, the upgrading of the CCTV Cameras project, the Development of the Sports Facilities, the Promotion of Tourism products are all projects and programmes linked to our 2010 Strategy and beyond.

In addition we have put up measures in place to ensure the safety of our people and our visitors during the tournament of the 2010 FIFA World Cup.

We have developed an integrated 2010 safety and security plan, involving all stakeholders including disaster management, emergency medical services and health services.

In Conclusion - Looking Ahead – 2009/2010 And Beyond

The year ahead of us and beyond represents a time of sustained challenges and opportunities for the District and its local municipalities as well as for our communities.

It is therefore necessary that we Work Together to Achieve More of what we sat ourselves to each as contained in the SDBIPs.

**LET ME WISH ALL OF YOU MERRY CHRISTMAS;
HAPPY PROSPERIOUS NEW YEAR**