



**Speaking Note by the Sedibeng District Municipality Executive Mayor, Cllr. Mahole Simon Mofokeng on the occasion of the 50<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Council held in the Chamber in the Mayoral Parlor in Vereeniging on the 01<sup>st</sup> September 2010, in Sedibeng**

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Madam Speaker;

Chief Whip of Council;

Colleagues

Allow me to greet this esteemed body of the leadership of Sedibeng District Municipality hereby constituted as the Council. We meet at the time when we are well within the last twelve months of our term of political office.

Have we done enough? Is there more we can still do for our communities? I ask. The answer lies somewhere within these walls and the members of this august body.

We have just concluded another successful Women Month Programme. This programme is fast taking both provincial and national stature. It is

correct to say that by this time next year, we shall have left a lasting legacy and the empowerment of women shall be central thereby. Madam Speaker, we take the time out to congratulate your astute leadership during the execution of the programme.

**Madame Speaker**, despite any doubts about our capability to host a successful 2010 FIFA World Cup, we did it. We proved the critics wrong. The press was having a field day that even the grass would not be ready at some of the stadia. Reading some of these comments, one would have been led to believe that growing grass was rocket science.

The tournament proved to be a great reconciler and joyful celebration throughout the country. We hosted Ivory Coast and Switzerland. We organized public viewing areas spread throughout the entire District to spread the Sedibeng Experience to all our communities.

Congratulations and our heartfelt thanks go out to the District and the local Municipalities and employees who were seconded to the World Cup Task Team for the job well done.

**Councillor Danie Hoffman**, we must surely applaud ourselves as Sedibeng District Municipality that we had an opportunity which many did not have during the World Cup Tournament.

We had one of our Public Viewing Sites, the Saul Tsotetsi Sports Ground attracting both national and international media and attention when together with the SABC Sports Channel broadcast live, the World Cup semifinals alongside the FIFA sponsored fan sites worldwide.

**Madam Speaker,** I must once again share with the house this afternoon that our mission of soccer development also received a boost in that the two teams we hosted together with the PSV Eindhoven from Holland ran soccer clinics for our young ones during their stay in our Region

We have had the occasion to engage with our communities in the past few months in the form of the State of the District Address and the District Wide Mayoral Imbizo.

Save for the few pockets of disgruntlement, our communities seem to be very upbeat about the work that we are doing. I hope that we will continue to provide feedback to the citizens of Sedibeng who have entrusted us with their hard-fought vote.

It is with the above in mind, that I am still committed to going back to Tshepiso Phase 04 with a view to respond to the genuine concerns of our communities in that area.

The self same commitment will be extended to Lesedi. This is made urgent by the need to bring peace in our communities which would enhance our ability to carry out the commitments we have undertaken in terms our IDP and SDBIP's.

We would not be able to carry out the said commitments we made in an environment of turmoil and disharmony. I hope that when the time comes for me to go into these areas, I will have your unqualified support, both physical and political.

For it is more so now than ever before that we need to be seen to be singing from the same hymn book and marching to the same drumbeat.

I also intend to go back to Sharpeville for a feedback meeting. The communities in that area need to be kept abreast as to things that we are doing in their name. We also need to know what their reaction and responses are to what has been done in their name and all those projects in the township.

We cannot allow any time and or space to come between us and our communities. Recent history will attest to the fact that history does not allow any vacuum. If we do not act swiftly, our detractors will claim the space to our detriment.

I am looking forward to robust engagements with our communities as we lead to the 2011 Local Government Elections. Our communities are behind us every step of the way. It is as we go about putting up new roads through the length and breadth of the District that I expect our communities to own these projects. I believe that we do have a catalyst to create the necessary jobs with these projects.

We have been known to carry out major projects without any allegations of corruption and nepotism. The Roads tarring project will be carried out in that fashion, I hope.

We have just recently had a very successful relaunch of the Mayoral Investment Council. If indication of the launch and very eminent personnel in the MIC are anything to go by, I can assure you that Sedibeng District Municipality is guaranteed its place in the economic development in the province and the country.

This body could not have come at a better time. Some of the members on the Mayoral Investment Council are:

- Ms Zodwa Manase: Chairperson: State Information Technology Authority
- Ms N Nyembezi-Heita CEO: Acerlor-Mittal
- Dr Molefi Oliphant : Former President of SAFA

- Mr Gery Immelman: Director : Stone Guards
- Ms Evelyne Saunders: Centre Manager: Standard Bank Business Banking
- Mr Gerit Meyer Vice Chairperson: Sakekamer
- Mr Steve Katrakilis Managing Director: Fourway Motors
- Mr Johan Sittig: Chairperson: Sakekamer

This is made important by the state of readiness for the launch of the Sedibeng Development Agency. The SDA will be launched sometime in November 2010. These augers well with the resumption of the Vaal 21 initiatives.

It is with the SDA and the Mayoral Investment Council working within an environment in which development is facilitated by the funding from the National Government towards the Regional Sanitation Scheme, as well as the Roads construction programme that we are looking forward to great things indeed.

**Councillor Johnny Tsoetsi**, I am happy to note that the threat to our communities which was precipitated by the ArcelorMittal/Kumba Mining affair has been resolved. We cannot afford to shed any jobs in the region at this stage or any other stage for that matter. The resolution of this matter could not have come at the most opportune time.

One would have hoped that our communities and businesspersons would have been awake to the empowerment opportunities linked to ArcelorMittal and Kumba Mining. We are currently developing an informed approach to ArcelorMittal with our SPED here in Sedibeng. On its conclusion, we will engage from an informed position.

It is in the nature of the approaching 2011 Local Government Elections that we are going to be bombarded by serious misrepresentations of the truth. I noted with disgust an attempt by one Marti Wenger (DA: MP) casting aspersions as to how we are supposed to have used Council resources to fund tickets for the 2010 FIFA World Cup.

The tickets for the Executive Mayor and other senior officials were sponsored from the private sector. This was done as a gesture of goodwill with no strings attached for the sterling work we have done as the Sedibeng District Municipality in preparation for the 2010 FIFA World Cup.

As if that was not enough, my office is receiving letters from Cllr. Hartman from Midvaal complaining about how a member of the community who suffered a stroke and a heart attack was not given treatment while being transported to the hospital.

I am sure that there would not have been enough space to carry both the patient and the passenger in an ambulance, except in movies where there is a camera in the ambulance to capture the scenes as they unfold.

It can therefore not be correct that the patients did not receive any care. Cllr. Cliff Hartman conveniently forgets to tell us in his letter what is the condition of the patient at this stage.

We can only assume that the patient is well otherwise there would have been hell for leather of noise coming from him. This type of behavior cannot be allowed to go unchallenged. This also poses a challenge to all of us to be circumspect of the information that we lead into the public arena.

I can safely report to this august body that our preparations for the Journey of the Living, to Lesotho are at an advanced stage. It is all systems go.

It is in the light of our commitment to the theme” Together with our communities-A final push to reclaiming our heritage. This leg of the trip will serve to highlight our commitment to reclaiming the rich historical heritage of Sedibeng District.

We are just two days away from the commemoration of the Vaal Uprising on the 03<sup>rd</sup> of September. We are ready and upbeat. Our communities have been mobilized. I am looking forward to a very successful programme.

September the 3<sup>rd</sup> or the “Vaal Uprising” was the third major contribution from our Region to the political landscape of our country, which was followed by many others. The other major contributions are the following:

- The 1902 Peace Treaty of Vereeniging which laid the foundation between the English and the Afrikaners’, which led to the formation of the Union of South Africa, uniting all the mini-republics into a Union. This resulted into the legislating of exclusion of the Blacks and the Africans in particular from running of the country.
- The Sharpeville Massacre which brought with it the banning of people’s organizations and imprisonment of the leadership, which led to the armed struggle.
- The Nangalembe Massacre and the Boipatong Massacre which gave the impetus to the establishment of the non-racial democratic society.

This meeting takes place during a protracted labour unrest by the Public Servants. It has gone on for far too long. While the right to strike is enshrined in our Constitution, we can only hope that this strike comes to

an end soon for the sake of our children and those who are made vulnerable.

I take this opportunity to applaud the gallant actions of MMC Tsokolibane and her team of volunteers in the hospitals. We can only thank her leading by example. I expect the same from all of us when our country is laid to siege.

A directive from the Department of Local Government and Housing has come to my attention. This directive seeks to centralize Communications in the province and Municipalities.

To that end, I hope that the Municipal Manager will speed up the relocation of the Communications Unit into the Office of the Executive Mayor without delay.

***I place the following reports for your attention:***

- Salary and wage collective agreement: 2010/2011 Financial Year;
- Midterm Financial Report for Sedibeng District Municipality and its Local Municipalities as at 31 December 2009;
- Policy: Occupational Health and Safety-Sedibeng District Municipality;
- Policy: Conferment of Civic Honours;

- Records Management Strategy- Sedibeng District Municipality: 2010/2011 Financial Year;
- Sedibeng District Municipality: Basa-Njengo Magogo Roll-out Campaign;
- Commencement of certain sections of the National Environment Management: Air Quality Act, 2004(ct 39 of 2004);
- Ambient Air Quality Management Station Maintenance, Repairs and Upgrading Audit;
- Integrated Rapid Public Transport Network design for the Sedibeng Region(IRPTN)

**In conclusion,** I hope that the commitment we have shown over the past four years coupled with strength that saw us pull through the challenging times earlier this year will spur us on to the lap of victory in 2011 Local Government Elections.

**Comrade Chief Whip,** for many years we have sad that the attraction and beauty of the Vaal River and the rich cultural heritage of Sedibeng make our area a good location for the film industry. I am pleased to announce that South African filmmakers, *Moments Entertainment*, have chosen to film their next feature film in the Vaal. Shooting will commence later this month.

As an appetizer to their work, they have agreed to show their yet to be released new film, "*A small Town called Descent*" exclusively to the Councillors and staff of Sedibeng next **Thursday, 9 September at 10h00 at the Civic Theatre**. We have never been to the bioscope together and all are invited.

I thank you.